

THE MESSAGE AND MINISTRY OF HOWARD G. HENDRICKS  
IN CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION  
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Howard G. Hendricks influenced generations of leaders in Christian education during the last half of the 20th century through the practical communication of his unique message and the personal nature of his teaching ministry. This study explored his life through interpretive biography, compared his message with current models of secular and religious education, and evaluated his ministry through case study research.

Hendricks has contributed to the field of Christian higher education through the publication of several books and periodical articles, as well as film series, audiotapes, and videotapes. He has presented thousands of messages across America and in over 75 countries worldwide. Hendricks has spent his entire 50-year educational career at Dallas Theological Seminary, teaching in the classroom, mentoring his students, and modeling positive values of Christian leadership.

Chapter 1 introduces the study, explains the purpose and significance of the project, and defines key terms. Chapter 2 describes the methodology employed for the study. Chapter 3 provides an interpretive biography of Hendricks, and chapter 4 compares the educational philosophy of Hendricks with secular and Christian models. Chapter 5 examines the ministry of Hendricks in a case study approach. Chapter 6 summarizes the study and offers conclusions and implications for future research.

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In memory of C. F. Lincoln, Jr. (1915-2000). This is for you, Dad.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Christian beliefs and religious traditions have played a significant role in the formation and development of higher education in America from colonial times to the 21st century. The historian Frederick Rudolph, writing about the importance of religion in the founding of American colleges, noted that “the dynamics of denominationalism gave strength and purpose to the religious life of many of the colleges” (Rudolph, 1962, p.1). Marsden (1994) has observed the following:

Any history of the origins of American universities must take into account that universities were shaped in part by imported models, particularly from England, Scotland, and Germany. A complete history of the role of religion in modern universities would have to deal extensively with the establishments and disestablishments of Christianity in the cultures and the universities of those countries and include comparisons with the American developments. (p. vii)

Over the past 350 years of American higher education history, Christian leaders have made an impact upon millions of students in colleges, universities, and seminaries. America’s earliest colleges were Christian institutions that provided a classical education for generations of future leaders. Therefore, it is vitally important to cite the influence of Christian educators at this present time when “normative religious teaching of any sort has been nearly eliminated from standard university education” (Marsden, 1994, p. 5).

Howard G. Hendricks, founder and former chair of the Department of Christian Education at Dallas Theological Seminary, currently serves as distinguished professor and chair of the Center for Christian Leadership at the seminary. For almost 50 years his message has reached hundreds of students on campus, and his ministry has touched thousands of people across the world through the lives and careers of those students. Since the 1950s, virtually every student who has studied at Dallas Seminary has been exposed to Hendricks's educational philosophy and teaching style in the prescribed curriculum course on Bible study methods that he teaches every fall semester.

Hendricks has preached and taught in over 75 countries, delivering messages at hundreds of churches, camp meetings, and conferences. He has served on boards or advisory councils of 20 Christian organizations. He has ministered as Bible teacher and chaplain to the Dallas Cowboys football club (1976-1984), and as a keynote speaker for Promise Keepers conferences. His impact on the Christian community worldwide has been furthered through various media, including film, radio, audiotapes, videotapes, and published writings. He has participated in several film series, and his work on radio is heard over 160 stations in the United States.

His published works include numerous articles in Christian journals such as *Moody Monthly* and *Christianity Today*. His latest series of four articles entitled, "On the Edge of Eternity-A Conversation about Aging," appeared in the year 2000 in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, a scholarly theological journal that is published quarterly by Dallas Seminary. Hendricks has also written or edited over 16 books, including his most recent work, *Color Outside the Lines: A Revolutionary Approach to Creative Leadership*, published in 1998.



The presumption of this researcher, however, is that Hendricks's contributions to Christian education are not best reflected in the number of books he has written or in the hundreds of messages he has delivered, but in the creative environment of the classroom where he plies his trade and in the lives of those students who come to share his passion for Christian ministry and leadership. Former students and colleagues were interviewed to provide layers of interpretive data to assist in this analysis of Hendricks's ministry.

One former student, Joseph Stowell, the current president of Chicago's Moody Bible Institute, said of his education at Dallas Seminary that he "was influenced by the Christ-like example of professors like Howard Hendricks, who taught me that godliness is a worthy pursuit" ("Dallas Seminary Prepares Exceptional Students," 1999, p. 2).

Bruce Wilkinson, founder and president of Walk Thru the Bible Ministries, has stated emphatically that while at Dallas Seminary he majored in Howard Hendricks. He further commented that within evangelical circles the very name of Howard Hendricks means Christian education (Wilkinson, 1987). Current Dallas Seminary president and noted evangelical author, Charles R. Swindoll, has said of Hendricks that "he is the one man who has had the greatest impact on my entire life" (Giesen, 2000, p. 3).

Although Howard Hendricks is generally recognized as a popular author and speaker, his work has seldom been referenced in scholarly journals or quoted in the writings of contemporary religious educators. Burgess (1996) did not include Hendricks in his list of representative evangelical theorists. Even Gangel and Benson (1983), writing their history of Christian education from a decidedly evangelical perspective, found no place in the text, notes, or selected bibliography for recognition of any work by Hendricks.

In order to accurately assess the contributions of Howard Hendricks in Christian higher education, this study was designed to examine both his educational philosophy and his personal ministry. A qualitative approach was chosen because of the complex process of inquiry needed to understand the problem and the interpretive nature of the data. Research data were collected using interviews, questionnaires, observation, and document analysis. The primary research questions that shaped the design of this project are as follows:

1. What research methods should be used to analyze the message of Hendricks?
2. How can the data be presented to accurately reflect the ministry of Hendricks?

#### Statement of the Problem

How can both the educational philosophy and the personal ministry of Howard G. Hendricks be accurately communicated and reported?

#### Purpose of the Study

This study constructed a life history that focused on the educational career of Howard G. Hendricks by combining interpretive biography with personal interviews, document analysis, and case study research. The interpretive biography of Hendricks was included to give meaning and insight into the critical moments which shaped his life and career. The message of Hendricks was evaluated by comparing it with secular and evangelical Christian models of education. His ministry was explored through interviews with selected colleagues, family, and former students, and in a case study of Denton Bible Church. The data used in this study came from written questionnaires, taped interviews, published materials, and participant observation.

## Significance of the Study

Higher education, from the Greek Academy to the American university, has been idealized, criticized, lionized, and eulogized by critics from within and without the academic community. Scholars in history, philosophy, psychology, and sociology have researched and analyzed higher education from a myriad of diverse perspectives, resulting in as much controversy as consensus. Books, journals, essays, and speeches have railed at its demise or rallied to its support.

Higher education has always fostered a certain amount of contradiction and conflict within its institutions. Indeed, “much of the history of higher education is written by the confrontations of internal logic versus external pressures” (Kerr, 1994a, p. xvi). Often, these conflicts precipitate crises that evoke criticisms from both within and without the academic community. As Pelikan (1992) observed,

The response from within the university to such attacks has frequently been less than constructive. Through a deadly combination of internal confusion and external pressure, the university has all too often maneuvered itself into a defense of the status quo, a carping posture in relation to the cultural and political mainstream, and a bunker mentality. (pp. 12-13)

Higher education in America has had its share of controversy in the years since Harvard College was established in 1636. Kerr (1994b) has identified “polycentric conflicts” that accompanied the larger and more complex colleges and universities in America at the end of the 20th century. Such conflicts require knowledge and communication from the leadership of the campus community.

In spite of these crises and conflicts, Kerr (1994b) reinforced the idea of America as the clear leader in science and scholarship with the following statement:

Status as the world center of higher learning has shifted over history from Greece in the classical age, to the Muslim world in the Middle Ages, then successively to Italy (1540-1610), England (1600-1730), France (1770-1830), Germany (1810-1920), and the United States (1920-1990). (p. 27)

However, Kerr (1994a) has also asserted that higher education “cannot escape history as it moves from serving royalty and the upper classes, the ancient professions and the church, to serving all persons and all institutions . . . it must additionally respond to the changing contexts of external society” (p. xvi). This challenge, however, is not easily met by academia because institutional change is often a laborious and fractious process.

Higher education has grown and developed in the United States for more than 350 years, reinventing itself throughout American history to emerge as the dominant intellectual power of the 20th century (Kerr, 1994b). However, as they move into the 21st century, American institutions are “caught in a revolution of moral, ethical, economic, political, and demographic turmoil” (Gangel & Benson, 1983, p. 348).

The rapid pace and complex nature of change in American society makes it increasingly difficult for higher education to respond accurately to the needs of this culture. In a March 2000 Gallup Poll, 16% of Americans cited “education” as the most frequent answer to the question “What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today?” (Saad, 2000). This is the highest rating that education has received as a response to that question in the 60 years it has been asked. Among the sampled groups

responding to the survey, the figures were highest for Democrats and political independents, women, and young adults.

Another Gallup survey (Moore, 2000) revealed that 66% of Americans believe that religion can answer all or most of today's problems; 68% are members of a church or synagogue; and 61% say that religion is very important in their lives. However, 58% of the same respondents believe that religion as a whole is losing its influence on American life, and only 36% attend religious services at least once a week.

Christian education has played an important role throughout the historical development of American education (Jones, 1976; Marsden, 1994; Rippa, 1969; Rudolph, 1962; P. Smith, 1990; Towns, 1975). Religion, mostly in the form of the Protestant faith, permeated higher education in colonial America (Reed & Provost, 1993, p. 298), but its presence is hard to find at most American public universities in the 20th century.

Historically, the development of Christian education is closely associated with that of general education in America. They share common influences from post-Reformation Europe, and they have faced similar challenges in dealing with the freedoms and expansion of a new society (Widder, 1991, p. 52). However, from frontier denominational colleges to research universities, the landscape of higher education in America has shifted dramatically over the past 350 years.

Theology is no longer considered to be the queen of sciences, and religion is often relegated to elective courses and student organizations. Bryan (1984) has even identified a historiographical principle of prejudice in many American history textbooks, which he describes in the following manner:

Religion is taken to be negligible in American history. To the extent that it has had any influence, that influence is negative. America was settled by people seeking religious freedom; when they had found it, obviously, religion ceased to have any influence, because the settlers had escaped from it. (p. 15)

The secularization of American higher education is clearly observed in Arthur Chickering's, *The Modern American College*, where neither the word *religion* nor the word *faith* appears in 810 pages of text. Karl Menninger has even written on the loss of "calling sin a sin" in our secular culture, so we have no reason to have faith for repenting, repairing, and reviving our lives (Menninger, 1973, p.13). O'Brien (1998) has attributed the radical departure away from the denominational colleges and religious institutions that once dominated American higher education to the rise of the research university at the end of the 19th century. Gangel (1991) has even suggested that a secular university cannot provide a natural habitat for Christian education because of the absolute link between Christian education and the Bible.

As each generation of Americans comes to prominence, new leaders arise whose ideas help to shape the prevailing view of their world and whose character influences the leaders of the next generation. Every field of higher education, from the arts and sciences to business and religion, has faced this perennial transformation. Regarding Christian education, Dettoni and Wilhoit (1995) observed that "every generation of Christians finds itself wrestling with the issue of how best to pass on the faith to the coming generation of Christians" (p. 19). H. E. Smith (1968) has stated that "Christians have the responsibility of discerning for themselves the unique task of their particular university" (p. 158).

Through textbooks, tapes, and biographies the ideas of past leaders are recorded for posterity. Through interviews, anecdotes, and observations, the people of history come alive in the reader's mind. On this concept Towns (1975) has noted:

Historiography too often places more emphasis on events, dates, and places than on people. But people make history live. They dreamed of a better world, fought wars for their convictions, taught students, sacrificed, and died untimely deaths. Without them there is no history, nor is there a future. (p. 11)

Through the lives and careers of former students the message of an educator becomes incarnate and visible from one generation to the next. Howard Hendricks has marked his generation with indelible impressions as a teacher of Christian higher education. His passion for teaching and his love for students continue to motivate and energize him after 50 years in the classroom. Hendricks has spent his entire career in higher education at one institution, Dallas Theological Seminary.

Dallas Theological Seminary, founded in 1924, is currently the fourth-largest seminary in the world. The 1999-2000 student enrollment totaled 1,623 students, including 359 women, 127 international students, and 283 American minorities. These students represent 47 states and 53 countries. In 2000, the Dallas Seminary faculty included 63 full-time, 31 adjunct, and 15 emeritus professors. Of the resident faculty, 81% hold earned doctorates (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999-2000).

Dallas Seminary has 8,566 living alumni ministering in all 50 states and in 90 countries around the world. The 5,913 known occupations of the alumni are grouped as follows: presidents of 87 schools; deans of 38 schools; 424 faculty members at Bible

schools, colleges, and seminaries; 2,338 pastors or assistant pastors; 523 missionaries; and 765 parachurch organizations. Of the alumni, 78% are working in education, churches, parachurch organizations, or missions, and 16.7% are employed in secular occupations (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1997).

In addition, Dallas Seminary graduates serve in 62 different denominations and have established 27 seminaries and Bible institutes worldwide. They have also written thousands of books and articles. Graduates of Dallas Seminary minister regularly to millions of people around the world, and the impact on the lives of those whom they serve is more significant than mere numbers can reveal.

For instance, one seminary publication (*Preach the Word*, 2000) told the stories of four graduates, including a pastor who ministered to victims of the fire that ravaged Los Alamos, New Mexico; a medical doctor who traveled to the mountains of southwest China to perform reconstructive surgeries on badly burned and scarred children; a 1999 graduate who moved to Auckland, New Zealand, to minister cross-culturally to Bible college students; and a medical student of Taiwanese descent who attended the seminary to improve her ability to share the gospel in preparation for a career as a medical missionary.

Over 9,500 alumni have studied at Dallas Seminary since its inception in 1924. Dallas graduates have produced numerous theological textbooks; contributed to modern Bible translations; served as faculty, administrators, deans, and presidents at scores of colleges and seminaries worldwide; and started many parachurch ministries, such as Young Life and Walk Thru the Bible (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999-2000).

Well-known author Chuck Colson has said that “Dallas is one of the premiere



seminaries in the world” (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999, p. 18). James Dobson, psychologist, author, and founder of Focus on the Family, spoke of Dallas Seminary’s “profound reach and impact of your commitment to sound biblical teaching and the advancement of the gospel” (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999, p. 20). One of the most recognized evangelists of the 20th century, Billy Graham, stated that “the theology of Dallas has penetrated my own mind and heart for many years, and members of the faculty have been among my friends and mentors” (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999, p. 21).

Howard Hendricks has taught at Dallas Seminary since 1951 and he remains one of its most well-known, respected, and popular professors (“A Lasting Legacy”, 2000). He has taught at the seminary during the tenure of all four of its presidents. All students at Dallas Seminary, as part of the curriculum for every degree plan, are required to take the course on Bible study methods that Hendricks team teaches every fall semester. This means that virtually every student who has attended Dallas Seminary in the past 50 years has been taught by Howard Hendricks.

In addition, with 16 books, hundreds of audiotapes and videotapes, and thousands of speaking engagements worldwide, Hendricks has spread his message throughout the evangelical community. His practical messages have helped people improve their ability to study and teach the Bible. His emphasis on modeling Christian behavior and mentoring young disciples has furthered his influence far beyond the classroom or the pulpit. His ministry in the business community has encouraged men and women to live the Christian faith in the workplace and in the home. His relationship with Tom Landry (as chaplain of the Dallas Cowboys football team, as a faculty member when Landry served on the

seminary board, and as a close friend) exposed Hendricks to another segment of society and allowed him to speak at Landry's private memorial funeral service in February 2000.

As Hendricks enters the 50th year of his distinguished career in Christian higher education, there exists no published biography of his life and no formal treatment of his teaching ministry and professional career. The purpose of this study was to construct a life history of Hendricks that focused on his contributions to Christian higher education by combining elements of biography, philosophy, and case study research.

### Definition of Terms

#### *Christian Education*

Christian education is a difficult concept to define. Burgess (1975) has noted that even scholarly authorities have not satisfactorily answered the question, "what is religious (or Christian) education?" Groome (1980) has described the Christian religious educator as an incarnation of the Word who shapes the direction of the Kingdom by educating its subjects in the church. Zuck (1972) offered the following definition:

Evangelical Christian education is the Christ-centered, Bible-based, pupil-related process of communicating God's written Word (and all of truth) through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of leading pupils to Christ and building them up in Christ. (p. 9)

For purposes of this study, Christian education is defined as "the process of teaching and learning (that is, the principles and practice of teaching and learning) conducted by a Christian teacher for Christians" (Chadwick, 1982, p. 21).

#### *Religious Education*

This term may be described as the general investigation of the religious dimension of life and the common human quest for a transcendent ground of being (Groome, 1980). This allows for common ground to be established among educators of different faiths. It also avoids the pejorative image of a church or Sunday school that is often associated with Christian education. Religious educators may follow one tradition of faith, or they may choose to combine ideas from more than one tradition. Christian religious education is a term that Groome (1980) has used in an attempt to be more descriptive and inclusive.

In this study, religious education is viewed as being similar to Christian education. The difference is that religious education developed to perpetuate and propagate the tenets of a designated religious system (or systems) while Christian education is based upon theological presuppositions derived from the text of Scripture (Gangel, 1991).

Christian religious education is a term that is better suited to describe education within a religious tradition rather than education based on biblical principles. Because this study refers to the work of one educator whose career has been spent at a distinctively Christian institution, “Christian” education is preferred as being the more precise term.

### *Qualitative Research*

“Qualitative research in education and other social science disciplines is presently undergoing rapid growth and change” (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p. 541). No fewer than 17 different qualitative research traditions have been identified as being used across many academic disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities. Some research traditions even blend qualitative and quantitative methods.

According to Creswell (1994), qualitative research is “an inquiry process of

understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (pp. 1-2).

### *Oral History*

A simple definition of oral history is found in the statement, "the use of oral interviews of individuals who witnessed or participated in particular events as sources of data about the past" (Gall, et al., 1996, p. 765). The definition used in this study is more comprehensive in scope. Oral history is defined as "a qualitative research process based on personal interviewing, suited to understanding meanings, interpretations, relationships, and subjective experience" (Baylor University, 2000).

### *Epiphany*

This term refers to a significant experience in a person's life that often changes him or her profoundly. Qualitative researchers record the stories that people tell about these critical times in their lives (Holloway, 1997, p. 54). Denzin (1989a) referred to epiphanies as moments of crisis in which a person's character is manifested (p. 70).

### *Interpretivism*

The interpretive approach to social science research focuses on human beings and their way of interpreting and making sense of reality. Researchers who employ the interpretive model view participants within the whole context of their lives. Most qualitative research has its origin in the interpretive perspective as investigators turn to the human participants for guidance, control, and direction (Holloway, 1997, p. 93).

### *Positivism*

Gall et al. (1996) defined positivism as, “the epistemological doctrine that physical and social reality is independent of those who observe it, and that observations of this reality, if unbiased, constitute scientific knowledge” (p. 766). Denzin (1989b) described the positivist assumption of detached research in measuring quantitative data with the statement, “by objectifying the observational process, this model divorces the researcher from the world under study” (p. 23). He added that

logical positivism and scientific sociology have historically assumed that the language of the natural sciences should and could be the language of the human sciences. Statements regarding human subjectivity, intentionality, and meaning were superficially treated, or excluded from the positivist’s domain. (p. 24)

Holloway (1997) offered the following comments:

Positivists followed the natural science approach in which theories and hypotheses are tested and verified or falsified. They insisted on neutrality and objectivity. Even today many researchers think that at the heart of all research lie numerical measurement, statistical analysis and the search for cause and effect. They feel that detachment and objectivity are possible, and that numerical measurement results in objective knowledge. (p. 122)

### *Post-positivism*

Gall et al. (1996) defined this term as “the epistemological doctrine that social reality is a construction, and that it is constructed differently by different individuals” (p. 766). This reality is described in terms of meanings and interpretations.

### *Interpretive Interactionism*

This term has been defined by Denzin (1989b) as "that point of view that confers meaning on problematic symbolic interaction" (p.13). It involves the study, expression, and interpretation of subjective human experience. He described the term by stating that "the research methods of this approach include open-ended, creative interviewing; document analysis; semiotics; life-history; personal experience and self-story construction; participant observation; and thick description (p. 7).

### *Interpretive Biography*

Denzin (1989a) defined the biographical method of research as the studied use and collection of life documents, or *documents of life* (Plummer, 1983; p. 13), which describe turning-point moments in individuals' lives. These documents will include autobiographies, biographies (Dilthey, 1910/1961, pp. 85-93), diaries, letters, obituaries, life histories, life stories, personal experience stories, oral histories, and personal histories. (p. 7)

A concise definition of interpretive biography was offered by Denzin (1989a) as being the process of "creating literary, narrative, accounts and representations of lived experiences. Telling and inscribing stories" (p. 11).

### *Case Study*

According to Holloway (1997), case study research examines an entity as a single unit with clear boundaries. It is the investigation of an organization, event, process, or program (p. 30). Case studies use in-depth research that takes place in the natural context of a phenomenon and from the perspective of the participants.

Holloway (1997) further observed that

much qualitative inquiry is seen as case study research, but case studies differ from other qualitative approaches because of their specific focus and the examination of individual cases. The boundaries of the case are clarified in terms of the questions asked, and the data sources used and the setting and person(s) involved.

As in other qualitative approaches, case study research is a way of exploring the phenomenon in its context. Researchers use a number of sources in their data collection, for instance observation, documents and interviews, so that the case can be illuminated from all sides. (pp. 30-31)

### *Thick Description*

Denzin (1989b) referred to thick descriptions as deep, dense, detailed accounts of problematic experiences used in interpretive studies. He added these comments:

It presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or the sequence of events, for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard. (p. 83)

This type of description “aims to give readers a sense of the emotions, thoughts and perceptions that research participants experience. It deals not only with the meaning and interpretations of people in a culture but also with their intentions” (Holloway, 1997, p. 154).

### Limitations

1. The education models used in this study were not analyzed or evaluated for their content but were summarized for purposes of comparison. The models were selected to represent composite views of secular education and evangelical Christian education.

2. Only those writings of Howard Hendricks that relate to Christian higher education and to adults were used in this study.

3. Colleagues and former students interviewed for this study were chosen on the basis of their relationship to Howard Hendricks, their willingness to be involved in the study, and their availability to the author. No generalizations have been made regarding the entire population of persons who have either studied under Hendricks or who have been exposed to his writings, tapes or speaking engagements.

4. It was assumed that Howard Hendricks's stature and integrity in the field of Christian education would enhance the reliability of his responses to the questions.

5. The author recognized his personal bias toward the subject as a former student and lifelong acquaintance. Nevertheless, every effort was made to compare and evaluate the data on content and merit alone.

#### Delimitations

1. This study was delimited to a study of the life and accomplishments of Howard George Hendricks through December 2000.

2. The case study chosen for this research, Denton Bible Church, was viewed from the perspective of its founding pastor, Mel Sumrall, and from the observations of the author from September 1994 through December 2000.

#### Summary



This chapter has introduced the subject of the study, stated the purpose of the study, established the significance of the subject, defined major terms, and presented the limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter 2 describes the methodology employed for the study and reviews the literature on qualitative research designs and methods of inquiry. Chapter 3 provides an interpretive biography of Howard G. Hendricks. Chapter 4 evaluates the philosophical viewpoints of secular and Christian education and then compares them with the educational philosophy of Hendricks. Chapter 5 examines the ministry of Hendricks through the words of selected colleagues and former students and presents a case study of Denton Bible Church. Chapter 6 provides a summary of the study and offers conclusions and implications for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter reviews the literature related to qualitative research traditions and describes the methodology employed in this study. Interpretive biography, interviews, personal observation, case study, and document analysis were the methods utilized in this project. Regarding methodology, Denzin and Lincoln (1998) have noted that

qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. (p. 3)

The purpose of this study was to construct a life history of Howard G. Hendricks that focused on his career in Christian higher education by combining an interpretive biography with document analysis and case study research. In the qualitative research traditions described by Gall et al. (1996), life history research studies the life “experiences of individuals from the perspective of how these individuals interpret and understand the world around them. Depending upon the researcher, a life history might be called a

biography, a life story, an oral history, or a case study" (p. 604).

While various methods may be used to collect and analyze data for a life history or biography, "more recent research has focused on the use of interviewing and direct observation, and on the use of narrative analysis. In education, life history has become a popular approach for studying teacher development" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 604).

However, as the field of qualitative research continues to grow and change, the complex nature of its designs makes it increasingly difficult to isolate and identify certain studies within a single tradition. Creswell (1998) described qualitative research as "an intricate fabric composed of minute threads, many colors, different textures, and various blends of material" (p. 13).

Life history is not a unified tradition of qualitative inquiry. Researchers in different academic disciplines conduct life history studies for specific purposes utilizing various research methods. Because a life history may be called a biography, life story, oral history, or case study (Gall et al., 1996), identifying the research design is directly related to the preference and purpose of the author. For example, Creswell (1998) placed life history, oral history, and interpretive biography all under the general heading of biography.

### Qualitative Research Methods

Although educational research historically has been dominated by quantitative methods and designs, recent years have shown a need for a greater variety of research methods (McMillan, 1996). Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses, but the best approach is generally considered to be the one that is most appropriate for the particular research problem.

In selecting the proper methodology for this study, a qualitative design was chosen because of the inductive, emerging nature of the research (Meloy, 1994) and the subjective nature of the data. In addition, the resources available and the purpose of the study seemed best suited to a qualitative design. Creswell (1994) has commented that,

for qualitative studies the research problem needs to be explored because little information exists on the topic. The variables are largely unknown, and the researcher wants to focus on the context that may shape the understanding of the phenomenon being studied. In many qualitative studies a theory base does not guide the study because those available are inadequate, incomplete, or simply missing. (p. 10)

#### *Data Collection*

The data collected for this study included participant observations, personal interviews, published materials (such as books, periodicals, audiotapes, and videotapes), unpublished materials (such as theses, dissertations, brochures, and internet documents), and written questionnaires. Copies of the interview questions, questionnaires, and related materials are located in the appendixes, along with a list of the interview subjects and a selected bibliography of Hendricks's published works.

To prepare for the interviews in this study, recognized books and articles that provide suggestions on the interview process were consulted as references (Brady, 1976). Personal interviews were recorded on cassette tapes. Each set of questions was structured and ordered in a standardized format. Some liberty was built into the process to allow for interaction and elaboration (Kerlinger, 1986, p. 441).

As a former student of Howard Hendricks, the author has been a participant

observer in the classroom and has listened to numerous messages delivered by Hendricks in various churches, chapel services, and other meetings over the past 30 years. Hendricks and his family attended the same church as the author for over 20 years. This relationship has increased the author's familiarity with Howard Hendricks. However, this fact should neither validate nor discredit this study.

As a social science researcher using interpretive data in a qualitative design, the author has been involved in the interactional process. This experience has both increased personal knowledge and influenced his opinion regarding the subject of this study. Full knowledge, however, is as elusive as true objectivity. Denzin (1989b) has noted that "the researcher, like the subject, is always in the hermeneutic circle, always seeing situations and structures in terms of prior understandings and prior interpretations. Full, objective, all-encompassing knowledge of a subject or situation is never possible" (p. 82).

#### *Validity and Reliability*

Kerlinger (1986) has observed that the interview is a potent research tool that is adaptable and uniquely suited to exploration in depth (p. 446). Nevertheless, issues regarding validity and reliability are often raised in qualitative studies, especially when oral history is used. Relying solely on the accuracy and objectivity of someone's memory or perspective of past events is debatable. Although Kerlinger stated that questions can be asked in such a way as to elicit accurate information, he added the following words of caution:

In using interviews as tools of scientific research, we must ask the questions: Can data on the research problem be obtained in an easier or better way? To achieve

reliability, for example, is not a small problem. Interviewers must be trained; questions must be pretested and revised to eliminate ambiguities and inadequate wording. Validity, too, is no small problem. Special pains must be taken to eliminate interviewer bias; questions must be tested for unknown biases. (p. 440)

In describing the challenges of the interview process, Hoffman (1996) offered the following observations:

One of the persistent challenges presented by scholars to oral history regards the *reliability* and the *validity* of the interviews. In this connection reliability can be defined as the consistency with which an individual will tell the same story about the same events on a number of different occasions. Validity refers to the degree of conformity between the reports of the event and the event itself as recorded by other primary resource material such as documents, photographs, diaries, and letters. (p. 89)

In this study, reliability was established through background research involving published documents, interviewer preparation, and question analysis by the doctoral committee. Validity was addressed by triangulating the data among sources to test for consistency. These data included personal interviews, written questionnaires, and published documents.

### Qualitative Designs in Social Science Research

Trying accurately to measure the impact and influence of an individual in terms of comparative statistics or other quantitative analysis would be incomplete and misleading. The impact of an educator cannot be accurately evaluated by the raw numbers of students, classes taught, or books written. To understand the meaning behind the numbers, a more

in-depth analysis of the data is required. Creswell (1998) emphasized the process of data analysis in the following definition of qualitative research:

[It is] an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (p. 15)

Bender (1985), in commenting on the objectives for designing a qualitative study, explained that the researcher wants

to *understand* unique *human experiences* and to share both the understanding and the process of understanding with the reader. Rather than seeking to test and prove an idea already assumed, or to argue and persuade the reader to an idea already held, the researcher's intent is to explore and discover the unifying form of some relatively unknown human experience, personal or social. (p. 47)

### *The Emerging Nature of Qualitative Research*

It is important to understand the emerging nature of qualitative research. Ideas cannot be forced on the data but must relate to and result from the information. As the researcher becomes more involved in the study, the information collected often takes on new meaning. Although the qualitative researcher begins the study with some idea about what data will be collected and the procedures that will be employed, the final design emerges after all the data are collected. The design is emergent because it evolves and changes during the study (McMillan, 1996, p. 241).

Meloy (1994) observed that "the foci of qualitative research proposals emerge as a

result of interaction in the research context; a priori ideas give way to issues discovered there” (p. 29). This process of discovery is part of the challenge of qualitative research.

### *The Elements of Historical Research*

Historical research methods represent some of the oldest traditions in qualitative research design. Gall et al. (1996) have defined historical research as "a process of systematically searching for data to answer questions about a past phenomenon for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of present institutions, practices, trends, and issues in education" (p. 644). Best and Kahn (1986) described historical research as a process of "investigating, recording, analyzing, and interpreting the events of the past for the purpose of discovering generalizations that are helpful in understanding the past and present, and, to a limited extent, in anticipation of the future" (p. 24).

Gall et al. (1996) have noted that "historical research helps educators understand the present condition of education by shedding light on the past. It also helps them imagine alternative future scenarios in education and judge their likelihood" (p. 643).

In contrast to many qualitative studies in which the researcher creates data through some form of instrument or intervention, the historical researcher discovers data from a variety of sources. The historical method, after a careful examination of the past, "provides information that aids in making educational decisions" (Wiersma, 1991, p. 290). Travers (1978) further indicated that valid generalizations may be derived from historical research data (p. 10).

### *The Use of Oral History*

Although this project was not intended to be a traditional biography, it may be



defined as biographical because it involves the study of an individual and his experiences as told to the researcher or found in documents or archival material (Creswell, 1998). According to Creswell's summary of types within the biographical genre, this study could be classified as a life history, "where a researcher reports on an individual's life and how it reflects cultural themes of the society, personal themes, institutional themes, and social histories . . . primarily through interviews and conversations with the individual" (p. 49).

Information for this study also came from interviews with other persons who have been associated with Hendricks, as well as written documents and other reference materials. These aspects fit the profile of an oral history. Thus, elements of an oral history (various sources and kinds of data) are viewed through the thematic and sociological perspectives of a life history study.

Although the practice of oral history is as old as history itself, its acceptance as a legitimate form of research has often been questioned. Dunaway (1996) observed that "in the last decade, however, as the fieldwork process of oral history has generated its own scholarly literature, more professors of these disciplines incorporate oral history practice into postgraduate programs" (p. 9).

Oral history also offers distinct advantages over traditional resources. It can reveal how individual values and actions shaped the past and how the past shapes the present (Truesdell, 1997). Oral history enables one to gather data that give insight into the actions of others (Hoopes, 1979). It can shed light on the subject's feelings, which can help explain the "why" as well as the "how." Perhaps the greatest advantage of oral history over written documents is that the historian actively participates in creating the oral document

and is therefore better able to obtain the needed information (p. 12).

Regarding the place of history in the process of the interpretive research, Denzin (1989b) has articulated the following points:

History enters the research process in four ways. First, the events and processes that are studied unfold over time. In this sense, they have their own inner sense of history. Second, these events occur within a larger historical social structure. This structure shapes, influences, and constrains the processes under investigation. Third, history operates at the level of individual history and personal biography. Each individual brings a personal history to the events that are under investigation. Fourth, the researcher has a personal, historical relationship to the interpretive process. This personal history also shapes research. (pp. 28-29)

It is important in the reporting of oral history research, as with the interpretation of any subjective data, that interviewer bias be acknowledged and recorded. The author of this study has acknowledged ties to both Dallas Seminary and to Howard Hendricks.

#### Interpretive Biography as a Method of Qualitative Inquiry

The traditional use of biography in social science research is well established. Creswell (1998) observed that “biographical writing has its roots in different disciplines and has found renewed interest in recent years. The intellectual strands of this tradition are found in literary, historical, anthropological, psychological, and sociological perspectives” (p. 48).

In discussing the nature of the qualitative research paradigm, Denzin and Lincoln (1998) stated that “all research is interpretive, guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about

the world and how it should be understood and studied” (p. 26). Commenting on the field of qualitative research, they asserted that,

for more than two decades, a quiet methodological revolution has been taking place in the social sciences. A blurring of disciplinary boundaries has occurred. The social sciences and humanities have drawn closer together in a mutual focus on interpretive, qualitative approach to research and theory. (p. vii)

Creswell (1998) defined a biographical study as one that focuses on an individual and that person’s experiences as told to the researcher or found in documents and archival material (p. 47). He used the term *biography* to denote the broad genre of biographical writings “that includes individual biographies, autobiographies, life histories, and oral histories” (p. 48). Instead of the classical biography, Creswell’s preferred approach is the interpretive biography, “because the writer tells and inscribes the *stories* of others” (p. 48). Creswell noted the following in his discussion of interpretive biography:

In the interpretive view, biographies are, in part, written autobiographies of the writers, thus blurring the lines between fact and fiction and leading the authors to “create” the subject in the text. Biographers cannot partial out their own biases and values; thus, biographies become gendered class productions reflecting the lives of the writers. (p. 50)

The procedural steps advanced by Denzin (1989a) for an interpretive biography were described by Creswell (1998, pp. 50-51) and are listed in the following table:

Table 1

*Procedural Steps in Preparing an Interpretive Biography*

Life Experiences	The investigator begins with an objective set of experiences in the subject's life, noting life course stages and experiences. The stages may be childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, or old age, written as a chronology, or as experiences such as education, marriage, and employment.
Stories	Next, the researcher gathers concrete contextual biographical materials using interviewing techniques. In this step, the focus is on gathering stories.
Epiphanies	These stories are organized around themes that indicate pivotal events (or epiphanies) in an individual's life.
Meaning	The researcher explores the meaning of these stories, relying on the individual to provide explanations and searching for multiple meanings.
Historical Context	The researcher also looks for larger structures to explain the meanings, such as social interactions in groups, cultural issues, ideologies, and historical context, and provides an interpretation for the life experiences of the individual.

Central to the interpretive biography is the epiphany, defined by Denzin (1989a) as an interactional moment or experience that leaves a mark on a person's life. The relationship between experiences and epiphanies was explained by Denzin (1989a):

Persons as selves have experiences, *experience* referring here to the individuals meeting, confronting, passing through, and making sense of events in their lives. Experiences may be problematic, routine, or ritual-like. Problematic experiences are also called *epiphanies*, or moments of revelation in a person's life. In an epiphany, individual character is revealed as a crisis or a significant event is confronted and experienced. Epiphanies often leave marks on lives. Students of the biographical method attempt to secure the meanings of epiphanies in the lives of the persons they study. (p. 33)

In these epiphanies, or moments of crisis, personal character is manifested. Epiphanies alter the fundamental meaning structures in a person's life. Their effects may be positive or negative. They may be routine or ritualized acts, or they may occur totally emergent and unstructured. Meaning and understanding may come only in retrospect (Denzin, 1989a, pp. 70-71).

Denzin (1989a) has argued emphatically that “a life is a social text, a fictional, narrative production” (p. 9). The subject matter of a biographical study is the life experiences of a person. The biographical method relies “upon the subjective verbal and written expressions of meaning given by the individuals being studied, these expressions being windows into the inner life of the person” (p. 14).

Because of the subjective nature of the biographical process, the dividing line between fact and fiction is often blurred. The limitations of language to adequately express life experiences, the interpretive nature of recollected factual information (often many years removed from its original context), the personalities of the subject, author, and reader interacting with the text, and the use of stories to convey essential information are among the reasons why Denzin (1989a) has described biographies as fictional narratives.

Nevertheless, there is a “real” person behind the individual who is described in a biographical narrative. Therefore, it is necessary to come as close as possible to the lived experiences of a person in order to capture, probe, and understand their meaning. Denzin (1989a) pointed out the following:

A person has a life or a set of life-experiences which are his or hers and no one else's. A life is lived on two levels, termed *the surface* and *the deep*. At the surface level, the person *is* what he or she does in everyday doings, routines, and daily tasks. At the deep level, the person is a feeling, moral, sacred, inner self. This deep, inner self may only infrequently be shown to others. It is assumed by users of the biographical method that this deep, inner life of the person can be captured in an autobiographical or biographical document. (pp. 28-29)

Life experiences stand like objective markers that identify the crossroads of an individual's journey. Life stories are the subjective accounts that interpret the experiences of a life. The interpretive biography is a fictional narrative that employs life stories to give meaning and structure to the life of its subject. Denzin (1989a) expressed this concept in the following manner:

Lives and their experiences are represented in stories. They are like pictures that have been painted over, and, when paint is scraped off an old picture, something new becomes visible. What is new is what was previously covered up. Something new is always coming into sight, displacing what was previously certain and seen. There is no truth in the painting of a life, only multiple images and traces of what has been, what could have been, and what now is. (p. 81)

### Summary

This chapter described the methodology used in this study and reviewed the literature on qualitative research methods and the use of interpretive biography as a method of inquiry. With the background established for employing the multimethod approach of research design, the next three chapters explore the person of Howard G. Hendricks, examine the educational philosophy of Hendricks, and evaluate Hendricks's ministry from the viewpoints of those who know him best.

Chapter 3 presents an interpretive biography of Howard G. Hendricks in a chronological manner, focusing on those experiences (or epiphanies) that resulted in life or career changes. Extensive quotations are used to convey thick descriptions and meanings (Denzin, 1989b). This type of biography is not intended to be a comprehensive summary of Hendricks's life. Concerning this approach, Denzin (1989a) has noted the following:

When a life is written about, the story that is told may attempt to cover the full sweep of a person's experiences, or it may be partial, topical, or edited, focusing only on a particular set of experiences deemed to be of importance. (p. 29)

## CHAPTER 3

### HOWARD G. HENDRICKS

This chapter presents a background of Howard Hendricks from his birth in 1924 through his 50th year of ministry at Dallas Theological Seminary in December 2000. This biography is not intended to be an exhaustive treatment of Hendricks's life and career, but rather to focus on the experiences that shaped the direction of his life into a career in the field of Christian higher education.

The biographical material in this chapter is presented in a chronological order that starts by following Hendricks from his early life in Philadelphia to his undergraduate days at Wheaton College. Then his experiences in graduate school at Dallas Seminary, his pastoral ministry at a church in Fort Worth, and his educational career as a professor and administrator at Dallas Seminary are described in successive order. The information was selected for its relevance to each topic from a variety of sources that included books, articles, letters, audiotapes, and personal interviews. Selected data were thematically grouped and presented in narrative form.

Denzin (1989a) identified the basic question that drives an interpretive project as, "How do men and women live and give meaning to their lives and capture these meanings in written, narrative and oral forms?" (p. 10). This chapter describes the experiences of Howard Hendricks that significantly marked his life and shaped his career. The stories are presented as accurately as possible from the subjective lens of the author's viewpoint.



### Early Life (1924-1942)

Howard George Hendricks was born on April 5, 1924, the only child of George and Cecilia Hendricks, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Hendricks (1996) has said of himself, "My life story is a story of the sovereign grace of God." Born into a broken home, Hendricks saw his parents together only twice in his life. When he was 18 years old he was called to testify at their divorce. Five years later they both attended his wedding.

Hendricks was raised in the home of his paternal grandparents because his parents had separated before his birth. Describing the relationship of his parents, Hendricks (1996) noted, "My mother was a Roman Catholic. My father was a nominal Protestant. They married too young. When I came along they tried to make a go of it, but it didn't last long."

The following story is quoted from the personal testimony of Howard Hendricks given at a chapel service on the campus of Dallas Seminary in the fall of 1996. This crisis experience was related as follows:

The Roman Catholic priest came to our home and told my mother she was living in adultery because she had not been married by the Roman Catholic church. My mother made the mistake of telling my father. My father responded by saying, "You tell him to come over here and tell me that." That was the second mistake she made. Because my father literally picked him up, threw him over the front porch and, providentially, he landed in a collection of bushes. And that broke up the marriage.

The Hendrickses were not emotionally or spiritually prepared for marriage and

parenthood, so young Howard was sent to live with relatives. Hendricks (1996) continued his story with this account:

Providentially, I went to live with my paternal grandparents. My grandmother had lost their first child, died in their arms. And the crisis was so severe, it led her to faith in the Lord Jesus. It led my grandfather to alcoholism. You need to know that my grandfather was an accompanist for the Metropolitan Opera Company. He was an interior designer who designed Grace Kelly's home in Philadelphia. He was an incredibly gifted human being, but totally wasted through alcoholism.

Many who have heard or read Hendricks, and most of his students, are familiar with the story of Walt, the tool and dye maker with a sixth-grade education who wanted to start a Sunday School class in North Philadelphia. He went into the community and befriended the young Hendricks after playing him in marbles and beating him every time. Hendricks (1987) considers Walt to be one of the two most influential people in his childhood, and he wrote the following tribute to him:

Walt picked up a total of thirteen boys in that community for his Sunday school class, of whom nine were from broken homes. Eleven of the thirteen are now in full-time vocational Christian work. Actually, I can't tell you much of what Walt said to us, but I can tell you everything about him because he loved me for Christ's sake. He loved me more than my parents did. (p. 22)

The second most influential person in Hendricks's childhood was his sixth-grade public school teacher, Miss Noé. Upon entering her class for the first time, after having polished his bad-boy image in the fifth grade, Hendricks was greeted with these words,

“Howard Hendricks, I’ve heard a lot about you, but I don’t believe a word of it.” He later remarked, “[I had] met the first person in my life who convinced me that she believed in me. And I would never let her down. That woman changed the course of my life” (Hendricks, 1996).

Years later, through providential circumstances, Hendricks would see Miss Noé again. Sitting in a nursing home in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, this retired teacher learned of her influence in the life of one sixth-grade boy. Hendricks told her how she had changed his life for the better, and he expressed to her his gratitude. During the conversation, she related how she had come to faith in Jesus Christ. She then told Hendricks how she would arrive at school 45 minutes early each day in order to pray by the desks of her students. The seeds of encouragement that she planted in the mind of a young Howard Hendricks came to fruition in his later ministry and teaching career (Hendricks, 1996).

In sharp contrast to Miss Noé was Hendricks’s fifth-grade teacher, Miss Simon. When she identified Hendricks as the boy with the worst reputation in school, the challenge to live up to that billing kept him in trouble most of that year. In fact, she had predicted that he and four other boys in her class would end up in the penitentiary. The hand of God can surely be seen at work in the life of the undisciplined problem child from a broken home who, along with one of the other four children on Miss Simon’s list, came to faith in Jesus Christ through the ministry of their Sunday School teacher, Walt. The other three boys on her list did go to the penitentiary (Hendricks, 1998b).

One memory that Hendricks recalled from his childhood provides a snapshot of the kind of behavior that would come to characterize his passion for teaching.

I think from earliest memories, my heart has been for teaching. I lived next door to a girl who went to a Roman Catholic school. I was a year ahead of her. So I enjoyed playing school with her because I could be the teacher. I would learn material and come home and teach it to her. She later became principal of the largest Roman Catholic girls' school in the city of Philadelphia. As an adolescent, I also functioned in the same role in almost every setting. Whenever I learned anything, I was always eager to teach it to someone who didn't know it.

(Hendricks, 1998b)

High school was a different matter for Howard Hendricks. He has described it as being a little rough. He wanted to serve Christ with his life, but he also wanted to be a part of the world. His interests expanded to include athletics and other extracurricular activities.

The following story reveals the conflicting desires that surfaced at that time:

It was at that time that they were starting teenage dance bands, and I became a drummer in a band that we put together. We finally got a contract in a ballroom in downtown Philadelphia, and I thought, "Man we're off to the big time."

But I didn't expect one encounter. I came home one night, 2:00 or 2:30 in the morning, and I went up the stairs. As I did, I kept hearing my name. I stepped up to my grandmother's room, and I kept hearing, "Howard, Howard." You see, my grandmother was hard of hearing. And when she prayed, it never occurred to her that anybody else could hear her since she couldn't hear herself.

I remember throwing myself across the bed one night saying, “Hendricks, how stupid can you get. The very thing you are looking for is what your grandmother possesses.” (Hendricks, 1996)

As the end of high school neared, Hendricks faced the inevitable decisions about his future that are common to seniors. He was also concerned about the response of his father to the decisions that he would make. Hendricks (1996) described his experience as follows:

As I moved toward the end of high school, I came to grips with how would I invest my life. My field of interest always was surgery; it is to this day. I spend a great deal of time watching surgery. It’s a fascinating field to me. I got a scholarship to a university which, if I made good, would go through med school. But at the end of my senior year, the Lord began to speak to me. It seemed almost audible at times. He said, “Howie, you can work on the body, but no matter how skillful you are, eventually it will die. Why don’t you consider working for me on the soul, which will last eternally.”

And I made that decision. But I had to communicate it to my father. You need to know my father to realize my apprehension. I was scared to death. And I remember walking into the room and saying, “Dad, I’m giving up my scholarship. And I’m going to go to Wheaton College to go into the ministry.” Well, I’m sure had I told my father I had leprosy he would have been much more pleased than to know that I was going into the ministry. But I will never forget his final words. He said, “So you’re going into the ministry. Then don’t come home.”

My father was a very, very disciplined man. And I greatly respect him in many ways. He taught me a great deal about leadership. And I remember him saying, “Son, if you make a commitment then don’t throw in the towel”. And that was behind his words, “don’t come home.”

#### Wheaton College (1942-1946)

Hendricks turned down the scholarship for pre-medical studies at Northwestern University. He went against his father’s wishes, and he gave up his personal dream of becoming a surgeon in order to enter the ministry and become a physician of the soul.

Poor study habits that he had developed during high school hampered the start of collegiate career. His inability to read or study with any efficiency slowed him initially, but he improved steadily and came to view his college years as a new lease on life. Hendricks began college with an interest in medicine, but he graduated with a passion for ministry. Interestingly, he scored high in math and science and low in the humanities on aptitude tests as a freshman, but he scored low in math and science and high in the humanities when he tested as a senior.

It was at college that Hendricks encountered some of the professors who most influenced and motivated him during his academic career. He recalled that these educators were “not only gifted as teachers in their field but . . . were very compassionate. Very much interested in my life. Men and women who built into my life in a permanent way” (Hendricks, 1996).

Merrill C. Tenney, a prominent New Testament scholar at Wheaton College, in Wheaton, Illinois, impressed Hendricks with the quality of his teaching and his ability to

motivate students. While many students avoided the rigorous course work in Tenney's classes, Hendricks accepted the academic challenge so that he could sit at the feet of the renowned scholar. Hendricks said of Tenney, "He always believed in me and convinced me that God had a great future for me" (Hendricks, 1998b).

Another professor, Rebecca Russell Price, greatly impacted his life during this time. Price taught in the Christian education department at Wheaton College, and she later founded the Christian education department at Fuller Theological Seminary, in Pasadena, California. Hendricks (1998b) stated that she had "a great influence on [his] life in the area of Bible study methods and Christian education."

Hendricks (1987) further illustrated the commitment of one of his college teachers with the following story:

I worked in the college dining hall, and on my way to work at 5:30 every morning I walked past the home of one of my professors. Through a window I could see the light on at his desk, morning after morning.

At night I stayed late at the library to take advantage of evening study hours, and returning home at 10:30 or 11 o'clock I would again see his desk light on. He was always poring over his books. (p. 28)

When Hendricks (1987) had a chance to ask this professor what kept him studying so much, the professor answered, "Son, I would rather have my students drink from a running stream than a stagnant pool" (p. 28). This kind of commitment to teaching marked Hendricks permanently and motivated him in his studies. As a result, he was well prepared for graduate studies at Dallas Theological Seminary.

### Dallas Seminary (1946-1950)

Donald Grey Barnhouse, pastor of the Tenth Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, was one of Hendricks's early mentors. Barnhouse was a well-known author, preacher, and editor of *Eternity* magazine. He was also founder of The Evangelical Foundation and, for many years, the radio voice of the Bible Study Hour. As a graduate of Princeton University, Barnhouse strongly urged Hendricks to attend Princeton Seminary and then to go into the Presbyterian ministry.

Concerning Princeton, Marsden (1994) has pointed out that “unlike the college, which was chartered by the state to serve the public but controlled by a predominantly Presbyterian board, the seminary was strictly an agency of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.” (p. 197). Nevertheless, the conservative traditions of Princeton were slowly replaced with a liberal world view. When asked why he chose the fledgling Dallas school over Princeton, Roy Aldrich, the first Dallas Seminary graduate in the class of 1927 and later the first president of Detroit Bible College, replied, “I have never regretted going to a seminary that didn’t have a reputation other than the character of the men who founded it” (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999, p. 4).

Some 20 years after Aldrich made his decision, Howard Hendricks chose Dallas over Princeton because so many of his professors at Wheaton College were graduates of Dallas Seminary. Recalling that decision, Hendricks (1996) remarked :

I always thought that Dallas Seminary was a graduate school of Wheaton College. So when it came to graduation, even though Dr. Barnhouse kept insisting that I go to Princeton Seminary, I said, “No deal, I’m going to Dallas.”



During his academic career at Dallas Seminary, two professors profoundly impacted the life and future ministry of Howard Hendricks. Both of these men served in dual roles as professors and administrators. One was near the end of his teaching career when Hendricks came to the seminary; the other was in the midst of a long and fruitful tenure at Dallas Seminary that would last another 40 years.

Lewis Sperry Chafer, an itinerant evangelist and Bible conference speaker, was president and professor of systematic Bible doctrine and spiritual life and service at Dallas Theological Seminary from 1924 until his death in 1952. Although Chafer had no children of his own, he considered each of his students to be an extension of his family. Chafer's concern for his students was as great as his love for the Holy Scriptures.

Hendricks (1996) recalled a statement by Chafer that probed deep into the young student's conscious mind. Chafer said, "Don't study for a class; study for a lifetime of ministry." Hendricks related the impact of Chafer's expository style of preaching with the frank observation, "I heard Chafer on one occasion publicly, and never recovered from it" ("A Lasting Legacy," 2000, p.1).

It was Chafer's untimely death in the summer of 1952 that led to Hendricks's joining the faculty of Dallas Seminary. The man who offered him the job, John Walvoord, was the other professor at the seminary who most impressed Hendricks as a student.

John F. Walvoord, internationally known author and Bible conference speaker, was professor of systematic theology for 50 years (1936-1986) at Dallas Seminary. He also served as president of the seminary for 34 years (1952-1986). Walvoord took on the role of chancellor in 1986 and will become chancellor emeritus in May 2001.

A Dallas Seminary brochure celebrating Walvoord's 90th birthday detailed these facts about this educator's remarkable career:

Out of Dallas Seminary's 75 year history only seven have been without the influence of John F. Walvoord. Entering as a student in 1931 from Sheboygan, Wisconsin, he earned his masters and doctorate and served as registrar and professor before becoming the school's second president in 1952.

Dr. Walvoord has written and contributed to over 40 books, appeared on more than 100 TV and radio programs reaching in excess of 100 million people with the prophetic message of Christ's return. (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2000)

Walvoord was Hendricks's major professor at the seminary. He took every course taught by Walvoord and even changed his major so that he could take more of his courses. Walvoord (1998) saw enough potential in Hendricks so that, "even while he was still a student, I started a Christian ed[ucation] department and had him teaching in it."

Hendricks (1996) revealed the kind of relationship that he had with Walvoord in the following story:

He believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. And I remember going into his office one day telling him what a sorry place this was. And he so patiently listened to me. And I remember I finally came to the end of my little prepared speech. And he said, "Well, Howie, where are you going?" "I don't know where I'm going, I'm leaving." And I took off down that center path until I got to the end, and I said, "Where [are] you going?" And suddenly it dawned on me, I had made a bumner decision.

Walvoord (1998) recalled the same story mentioned above in these words:

Dr. Hendricks is somewhat moody, if I may put it that way, and he kept wanting to resign from everything. And his second year he came to my office and said he was quitting. And I told him, I said, “Well, where are you going?” Well, he tells the story himself, he says he left my office and he went out the sidewalk leading to Swiss Avenue, “Where am I going?” He decided he wasn’t going anywhere, so he came back in and re-enrolled as a student.

So he didn’t pull out. But customarily, almost every year, he wanted to leave. And I stayed with him. I recognized that he was in a bad mood or something. And I told him I wouldn’t accept any resignation unless it was in writing. Well, he wouldn’t write it, so he never let go.

Walvoord’s unwavering belief in Hendricks, and his steadfast refusal to accept Hendricks’s unwritten resignations-“almost every year he wanted to resign over something”-were major factors in keeping Hendricks at Dallas Seminary in the early years of his career (Walvoord, 1998). Hendricks looked to Walvoord as a mentor, and their relationship developed personally as well as professionally over the years.

Another vital factor in the efforts to keep Hendricks in Dallas, and a driving force behind much of his personal and professional success, has been the influence of his wife, Jeanne. Howard and Jeanne Hendricks were married on June 14, 1947. Giesen (2000) has written the following synopsis of their relationship:

They met in Philadelphia, attended Wheaton College as undergraduates, and have now been married 104 years, “her 52 to me and me 52 to her.” Jeanne left school to

move to Dallas with her new husband. She later graduated from Southern Methodist University. Her own writing and speaking career, always significant, has flourished since their four children reached adulthood. She cherishes her roles of wife, mother, and grandmother. (p. 5)

Jeanne Hendricks (2000) remembered being impressed with the natural leadership that a young Howard Hendricks exhibited as a member of Christian Endeavor, a youth organization in Philadelphia. She recalled that, “as I learned of his total dedication to goals similar to mine, we fell in love, and, as a new bride, I agreed to move to Dallas where he was enrolled in graduate school” (p. 1). She has written the following description of her perceptions as the wife of Howard Hendricks from their 1st year of marriage to their 52nd:

He was very focused as a student and a hard worker—teaching in an evening school while also holding down a part-time job in a factory. Since he had no role models in his family, he had minimal understanding of the role of a husband. Over the years he has changed dramatically because he quickly realized his lack and made a concerted study of the scriptures to determine what God required of a husband and father. Through 52 years now, he has developed into an incredibly loving and wise husband and father. His temperament is such that he always set high standards of excellence for himself and for others. He could be characterized as somewhat demanding, but always tempered with generosity and love. (p. 1)

Regarding her husband’s influence and support in her professional career, Jeanne Hendricks (2000) remarked:

Unquestionably my husband has been a mentor in every respect. His high standards

of performance have challenged me to give the best I can produce. His unrelenting logic and loyalty to me personally have lifted me far beyond what I would have accomplished otherwise. His formidable ability to apply the scriptures to life have improved my life immensely. (p. 2)

Over the years, the Hendrickses have collaborated on several projects that focused on marriage and family issues from both biblical and practical perspectives. Included among these are two books that Howard and Jeanne Hendricks coauthored: *Footprints: Walking through the Passages of Life* (1981) and *Husbands and Wives* (1988).

Warren Benson, recognized evangelical author, scholar, and administrator, and a close friend and colleague of Howard Hendricks, noted what he believes to be the source of greatest impact in Hendricks's career:

I believe his marriage to Jeanne was very significant. A very bright woman, she has helped him extensively with his writing projects. He holds her in high esteem. They have been equal partners in their life together—each contributing in great measure to the other. (Benson, 1998, p. 2)

Based on their association and friendship since the 1950s, first when he was a student of Hendricks and later, a colleague, Benson (1998) observed,

[I] found him to be a man who walks with God, whose life and schedule is dictated by God's call on his life, a faithful husband and father who made his children and his wife more important than the seminary, and who never lost his sense of humor and balance. (pp. 1-2)

### Pastoral Ministry (1950-1952)

Having yet to be fully persuaded on teaching as a career, Hendricks felt compelled to pursue a ministry in the pastorate as his seminary education came to a close. Several ministry opportunities were offered to him, but he chose the one that would give him the greatest challenge. In 1950, the year he graduated from Dallas Seminary, Hendricks started Calvary Presbyterian Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

Concerning this church, Hendricks (1996) said,

I had been ministering in a Presbyterian church there, and the presbytery had told the board of elders, “You cannot have a pastor from Dallas Theological Seminary.”

So they said, “If we can’t have a pastor from Dallas Seminary, we’ll just form a church where we can get a pastor.” And they called me.

When Hendricks started the church, now known as McKinney Memorial Church, he quickly realized that his formal education at Dallas Seminary had not adequately prepared him for the realities of pastoral ministry. As he said, “We had no courses in Christian education. And I was spending the bulk of my time training teachers and equipping the elders in doing things that were never discussed when I was in seminary” (Hendricks, 1998b).

In spite of the struggles, Hendricks (1998b) remembered the following:

I certainly had a passion for the pastorate, leading people to Christ, and building them up in the faith. We saw this happen in the two years that I was pastor of the church in Fort Worth. We saw a steady stream of people coming to Christ. We saw Christians taking giant steps in their faith.

While a student at Dallas Seminary, Hendricks had also worked as an instructor at the Southern Bible Training School in Dallas. Later, he was instructor and dean at Fort Worth Bible Institute. It was in 1951, however, when Walvoord invited him to be a part-time instructor at Dallas Seminary, that Hendricks developed the passion for teaching that would eventually lead him out of the pastoral ministry and into the classroom.

Even though his pastorate was going well, Hendricks was about to face the most significant moment in his professional career. The crisis experience, or epiphany, that he encountered came in the form of a career decision. But this life-changing event was itself the result of a burning desire that had flamed into a deep conviction.

Hendricks wrestled with the decision for months. His wife, his mentor, and the board of elders of his church advised him to stay at the church in Fort Worth. Despite their encouragement for him to stay in the pastorate, Hendricks (1996) felt a sense of deep peace and a strong conviction that God wanted him in a ministry of multiplication. He described this difficult situation:

Immediately after graduation, I started teaching part-time at the seminary. And I must confess, that's when I got the disease. And after several years of pastoring in Fort Worth, I had the hardest decision to make of my life. I felt that God had called me to a ministry of multiplication. I can pastor one church, or I can teach in a seminary where I can train 10 men to preach in 10 churches. I can go to one mission field, or I can teach in the seminary and shape five guys to go to five countries on the mission field. I can teach in one school, or I can train a half a dozen guys to teach in a half a dozen schools. And so I resigned.

### Educational Ministry (1951-2000)

Being a teacher, in the sense of communicating and conveying information to others, has always come naturally to Hendricks. From informing childhood friends of events in Philadelphia to training returning soldiers how to study the Bible in Dallas, Hendricks showed that he was ready and able to teach others. Over the years his interests have ranged from discipleship and mentoring to giftedness and leadership, but his first love has always been teaching.

In reference to Hendricks's lifelong commitment to teaching, Galli (1991) cited him as having said:

“I discovered long ago that teaching is my spiritual gift. And I've spent all of my life fighting to keep people from making me a president or a dean or something. If you take me out of the classroom, I lose my reason for existence.” (p. 7)

The pastorate offered Hendricks many opportunities to teach and train others, but the classroom energized him with the challenge to train leaders who would then teach others. The pulpit limited his audience to those in attendance, but the lectern expanded his sphere of influence through his students.

The summer of 1952 was pivotal in the life of Howard Hendricks and in the history of Dallas Theological Seminary. Hendricks had decided to leave Dallas and enroll in a doctoral program at Yale Divinity School. Dallas Seminary had begun construction on the campus chapel to be named in honor of its president, Lewis Sperry Chafer. When Chafer unexpectedly died that summer, a phone call from Dallas to Wheaton changed the course of Hendricks's life and the future of Dallas Seminary.



The significance of that telephone call and the decision making process that ensued were explained by Hendricks (1996):

Yale had no courses during the summer and Wheaton did. And Yale said we'll transfer all of the courses from Wheaton. So I went to Wheaton [and] moved the whole family to my wife's parents' home up in the East. And that was the summer Dr. Chafer died, 1952. And I will never forget the call that Dr. Walvoord put in to me, and he said, "Howie, would you reconsider? Would you come back and teach theology?" I had majored in his department; that was my field of specialty. He said, "The homiletics professor has had a heart attack, we need somebody to teach homiletics." I said, "Well let me think and pray about it." And when I came back to talk to him I said, "I'll come under one condition—and that is that I can teach a course in Christian education." He said, "That's exactly what we want."

After having made the emotional decision to leave Forth Worth and pursue graduate studies at Yale under some of the leading religious educators of the day, and having uprooted his family so that they stayed in Maryland while he spent the summer in Wheaton, Hendricks prepared to go to New Haven, Connecticut, and begin all over again. Instead, he was offered the opportunity in Dallas to teach Christian education courses and to start building the department. This compelling opportunity overshadowed the prospect of studying at Yale, but the choice not to go to Yale has left Hendricks with some feelings of regret in retrospect. Hendricks (2000) offered this summary:

So, generally speaking, God led me to return. And I had the privilege of starting the department in 1958. I mean get it full blown. Up until then I would add a

course each semester in education. As I look back on it, I wish that I had found a way to complete my degree at Yale. Because its a once in a lifetime opportunity. I would have appreciated the research experience and the mentoring by Paul Vieth, who was then the head of the religious education department at Yale. So, it was one of my regrets, but I had to make a choice, and I did.

Benson (1998) wrote of Hendricks's decision to return to Dallas instead of going to Yale:

Howard Hendricks, when he did not go to Yale Divinity School and study under Paul Vieth and Randolph Crump Miller, for whatever reason, passed up an opportunity to have worked with Sara Little, Charles Melchert, or William Bean Kennedy as fellow students. Technically, he never was in a context in which those latent skills would have been developed in a sophisticated manner. HGH has continually demonstrated that he knows how to do good research. His latest book, *Color Outside the Lines*, provides ample evidence of this. In my judgment, the key is that he never had access on a regular basis, to libraries such as he would have found at Yale. (pp. 2-3)

The personal reasons that kept Hendricks in Dallas over the years and the influence of his wife and family in facing difficult career decisions are important issues to examine in the context of his life history. Financial pressures, professional frustrations, and family needs were factors that emerged when thoughts of leaving Dallas came to Hendricks. The spirit of a restless adolescent, the tempting offers received from other institutions, and the prospects of intense research were constantly tugging at him to move elsewhere.

However, the unwillingness of Walvoord to accept verbal resignations and the unwavering support of his wife and family combined to keep the Hendrickses in Dallas.

He related the struggles he faced in those early years:

I think there were a number of things that contributed. One was financial. At times we were 3 months behind in salary and I had to go teach the Dale Carnegie class to keep body and soul together. And I had some choice invitations from other schools that would pay me twice what I was getting in Dallas and give me more sabbaticals, and office help and things of that kind.

I think another one was that I was at the seminary in the days when they were still struggling with an education philosophy which was in some ways diametrically opposed to mine. And I wasn't sure I wanted to spend the rest of my life in the golf illustration of hit one and drag Joe. So I felt that maybe I could go elsewhere and accomplish my objectives. But the longer I thought about it, the more I realized I have a bird on the ground here. I have an opportunity that is unparalleled to develop a Christian education department, to invest my life in something that nobody was that interested in. As always, I rise to a challenge.

If somebody else can do it, I'm not interested. But if somebody else either cannot do it or will not do it, that constituted a challenge to me.

And then I would say third was just my own personal sense of frustration. At times when you wonder is this really the payoff, is this the best place to spend your life? So that would come up periodically, and I would think maybe I need to resign and go someplace else. (Hendricks, 2000)

Hendricks may have appeared to be moody, restless, and impulsive during this time in his life, but he always took time to think and pray before making a major decision. He listened to the counsel of his wife, and he considered the welfare of his family. He related the influence of his family on his ministry:

My greatest asset has been my wife. She has been 100% on the team; never given me any opposition. Her only question was, "Is this what God wants you to do? If so, I'm on your team." I think I set a record for resigning at the seminary. When I would say, "I think I'm leaving," she would say, "OK, but all I want to do is ask one question. Is God leading you out of the seminary or are you leading us out of the seminary? Because if God's leading us out then I'm packing the dishes, but if you're leading us out we could be in trouble."

I would say that my children have been an asset because they've constituted something of a laboratory. I came out of a broken home, Jeanne came out of a nominal Christian home, so we didn't have any sterling background, no history of a family in the faith for a long period of time. So we had no models for parenting, no models for marriage. We struggled during the early years, did the best that we could. I'm sure oftentimes not too effectively. I would say, generally, my children have been very supportive of my role. I don't think they've always understood why I did what I did, which may have been my fault, but they were not a hindrance to my ministry and in many cases were a help. (Hendricks, 1998b)

Another important issue to address involves the reasons why Hendricks has chosen to remain in the classroom as a teacher for his entire career rather than in the office as an

administrator, dean, or president. He did found and chair the department of Christian education at Dallas Seminary, but his heart has always been in teaching. He explained his reasoning in the following manner:

I would say a number of things can be set forth. One is that I feel that my primary gift is in the realm of teaching. I've spent all of my life watching people who experienced the "Peter Principle"; in other words they are good at sales so we make them the sales manager and they virtually ruin the organization. I've seen people who, in my judgment, were some of the finest teachers but they're always kicked upstairs to a position of administration. Nothing wrong with that, but I don't think that's their motivated ability, that for which they've been wired. So, I tried to spend the bulk of my time in the area for which I felt greatest competence.

As far as the scholarship, I have obviously tried to engage in scholarly activity, even though some would think I don't have the degrees and the qualifications for it. Most of my writing has been at a popular level because, again, it's a practical consideration. I discover a lot of my colleagues, a lot of people in academe, who spend all of their life in scholarly pursuits and writing books that virtually no one reads. I wanted to change the church, the Christian community at the lay level, and I was primarily preparing and training students who were going to work at that level. So I wanted to produce some tools that they could use out in the field that were geared more to a lay or popular level rather than a scholarly level. This was a judgment call and, obviously, many could take exception to my decision.

(Hendricks, 2000)

During the 1950s, if a student at Dallas Seminary wanted to major in Christian education that student would have to “major in Howard Hendricks” because he was the only instructor in the department and he taught every class. Each year he added another education course to the curriculum, and in 1958 the department was formed. Over the years, Hendricks was able to add faculty members who represented high-quality scholarship and recognized credentials.

In 1982, Hendricks turned over the chairmanship of the department to well-known author and educator, Kenneth O. Gangel. Gangel, distinguished professor emeritus of Dallas Seminary, currently teaches at Toccoa Falls College in Georgia. Since 1998, Michael S. Lawson has served as chair of the Christian education department at Dallas Seminary. Hendricks has continued to teach in the department in addition to teaching his favorite course, Bible Study Methods, each fall semester through another department. His feelings about teaching this course are revealed in these comments:

I’ve taught it now for 50 years. I think its my favorite because it is the one course that launches a person on a personal Bible study process that’s going to last the rest of this life. In other words, whatever else they’re going to be, they will be Bible teachers, and in order to be Bible teachers, they have to be Bible students.

(“A Lasting Legacy,” 2000, p.1)

When discussing the subject of teaching and learning, Hendricks instinctively becomes energized and enthusiastic. He is continually challenged by the opportunity to fire a creative spark in others. For him, teaching is not an academic exercise that occurs in a classroom; it is an evaluated experience that occurs in the laboratory of life.

Teaching is intensely personal to Howard Hendricks. His goal is to see the lives of his students transformed by the power of God. The Christian educator works with the Spirit of God, not merely to inform the mind but to renew the mind. Hendricks (1991) used the following story to illustrate the kind of attitude that Christian educators should exhibit toward their students:

I once took a graduate course at New York University. I knew the professor was brilliant, in complete command of this field. So on the first day of class, I sat in the front row; I didn't want to miss anything.

I soon noticed, however, that the other students crowded the back rows. These being graduate students, motivated learners, I couldn't understand it. But in a matter of minutes, I figured it out.

The professor was remote. He had little enthusiasm and simply droned on during the lecture. Later in the course he said to the class, "Look, I get paid whether you learn or not." Then I understood his cold approach to his subject.

As a Christian educator, that attitude will never do. My goal is not to lecture, or even to lecture with excellence. My goal is to teach in such a way that students both learn and employ their knowledge. Christian educators should view themselves as nothing less than disciplers. The knowledge we communicate affects more than the minds of our hearers; it should change lives. (p. 19)

Hendricks possesses such a passion for teaching that "it's kind of a standing joke in our family that if you stick five students in front of Dad he's like Pavlov's dogs, he just begins to salivate. I just live for students. They turn my crank" (Hendricks, 1998b).

In direct contrast to the story about the university professor who seemed apathetic in his approach to teaching, Hendricks (1991) illustrated what he considers to be the right attitude for teaching in the following story:

One day when my daughter was in high school, she said to me, “Daddy, I know you’re busy, but you’ve got to come to our parent/teacher night. You have to meet my biology teacher.”

The night of the event, we arrived late and sat in the back row. I heard a scratchy voice from the front, but I couldn’t see the teacher. He was sitting down, describing all the experiments his students were doing, one incredible scientific project after another.

I finally stood to see better and discovered that the teacher was in a wheelchair, a polio victim. His presentation impressed me so much, I went up afterward to talk to him. I found out he had two Ph.D.’s and that several area universities had sought him as a professor.

“Why in the world do you keep teaching in high school?” I asked.

“Can you think of anything more exciting,” he replied, “than molding young, plastic minds?”

He had the right attitude for teaching, and that was why my daughter and the other students responded so well to him.

The only thing I can imagine more exciting than molding plastic minds is the privilege of molding plastic lives and producing souls for eternity. And that, finally, is the unique role of Christian education. (p. 25)



Another area in which Hendricks has demonstrated the attributes of an effective teacher is in personal relationships with his students. He genuinely cares about and is interested in the lives of his students. When asked about his greatest contribution to God's work during his tenure at Dallas Seminary, Hendricks said:

"I would say primarily my personal relationship with students. I've spent these 50 years primarily in discipleship and mentoring, and I think that's where my greatest contribution has been. In other words, I believed in students when they didn't believe in themselves." ("A Lasting Legacy," 2000, p.1)

While sheer numbers prevent him from personal involvement with all of his students, Hendricks communicates his passion and concern for his students in any learning environment. He is especially drawn to learners who are teachable and willing to grow.

Hendricks has always made an effort to mingle with his students on campus outside of the classroom. Giesen (2000) wrote of this unusual practice:

In the days before air conditioning, a certain campus bench between Stearns Hall and Mosher Library was known as "Prof's bench." He kept "office hours" there; students could stop by. Their questions drew on Prof's wisdom. What the students remember is not so much his answers but his availability to listen to their questions. (p. 3)

Over the 50 years of his career, Hendricks has shifted his focus of ministry from multiplication to mentoring and discipleship to creativity to leadership. In 1986, he founded the Center for Christian Leadership on the campus of Dallas Seminary, at the request of then-president, Donald K. Campbell.

Hendricks (1996) explained the reasoning behind his transition from chair of the Christian education department to chair of the Center for Christian leadership:

Eventually I turned the department over to Dr. Kenn Gangel. I have a personal philosophy of leadership. I am deeply concerned in the evangelical community that often the innovators are the embalmers. And I never wanted that to be true of me.

And so I went in to see Dr. Campbell and said, “Don, I’m checkin’ it to ya.” He said, “I think you need to reconsider. For all of your years you’ve been talking about leadership. This is the passion of your heart. Why don’t you go out in a blaze of glory and help us found a center for Christian leadership”. And I felt led of God to do that.

The Center for Christian Leadership seeks to build godly men and women into servant-leaders with the character, vision, and skill to build other leaders. The target audiences are Dallas Seminary students, pastors and vocational Christian workers, lay leaders in local churches, and business leaders in the workplace. The campus program is designed to enable men and women to know and function with their spiritual gifts and Christian character with a clear, personal vision for a lifetime of impact in equipping others toward fulfilling the Great Commission (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999-2000, p. 126).

This program presents a model of discipleship intended for replication. Thus, Hendricks has continued to pursue his goal of having a ministry of multiplication. From teaching seminary students to training business leaders, the mantra of Howard Hendricks has always been the message of 2 Timothy 2:2—commit the things you’ve heard to faithful men and women who will be able to teach others also.

## Summary

Hendricks has often said that Christians never graduate from the school of discipleship. No one is exempt from the curriculum. As much as individuals might like to make pain and suffering electives in life, God has made them required courses. Giesen (2000) described the most difficult test of Hendricks's life with these words:

In January 1996, Hendricks reported to the doctor's office for removal of a small skin cancer. Eight hours later, there was still more to remove. After more surgeries, with a large hole in his head and facing invasive surgery into his skull, Hendricks received warning of danger to his ears, eyes, and brain. Holding his wife's hand he said, "Either God is sovereign or He is not. And, if He's not, we're in deep trouble. But I am coming down on the side that He is."

After the operation, the doctor reported, "It's obvious God is at work in your life. This cancer went as far as it could go toward your ear without affecting your hearing, as far as it could go toward your eye without affecting your eyesight, and as far as it could go toward your brain without affecting your mind." (p. 5)

Four years after he was diagnosed with cancer, Hendricks lost his oldest child, Barbara, to a deadly disease. His daughter-in-law, Nancy, died in October 2000, after fighting cancer for years. In 2000, he lost many of his valuable possessions during a plumbing catastrophe near his office, and he and Jeanne moved their place of residence within the city of Dallas. Through it all, his faith in the sovereignty and goodness of God has been strengthened. His resolve to live out a full life for God may be measured in part by 76 years on planet Earth, 67 years of faith in Christ, and 50 years in public ministry.

The following tribute to Howard Hendricks was delivered in May 1996 at the 50th reunion of the class of 1946 at Wheaton College. The speaker, Warren Benson, is a recognized scholar in the field of Christian education who is also a friend, colleague, and former student of Hendricks. The transcript of his speech is as follows:

Among evangelical Christian education communicators in this century, one name would stand out on any list. In the late 1950s and onward Howard George Hendricks has become Christian education's peerless communicator. In the opinion of one historian, Dr. Hendricks ranks as one of the most powerful teachers in North American evangelical Christian education circles.

And his influence has not been confined to classes and the chapel pulpit of Dallas Theological Seminary. He has preached and taught in over 75 countries. His unusual gift in the choice of memorable phraseology has made an indelible impression on his hearers. To the present, he remains in constant demand. His incisive wit and precise handling of Scripture have worked in concert with the Holy Spirit in bringing people to Jesus Christ and spurring Christians on toward a new zest in spiritual maturity.

In addition, Mrs. Jeanne Hendricks, also a published author of note, deserves some of the plaudits. Her journalism degree and skills in that area have contributed to Dr. Hendricks's sterling literary accomplishments.

The Hendricks's have 4 children and 6 granddaughters. With his father, son William has co-authored several books that have been exceedingly well received.

Dr. Hendricks has served on boards or advisory councils of 20 Christian organizations. He has been a participant in several film series and his radio work is heard over 160 stations in the United States. His guidance has helped launch the Promise Keepers ministry on a steady course. The scope of Dr. Howard George Hendricks's lively and powerful skills has benefitted the church around the world—through his own significant contribution in preaching and teaching as well as the thousands of students he has produced.

One of the most poignant scenes from Dr. Hendricks's memory bank took place in the huge Convention Center in Anaheim, California. Dr. Rebecca Price, Dr. Hendricks's mentor and long-time Christian education professor at Wheaton, was in the last days of her arduous, surgery-filled earthly journey. Having gone to Fuller Theological Seminary to be their first Christian education professor, Dr. Price beamed with pride from her wheelchair in the front row as "her Howie" captivated the crowd of 12,000 as he lifted up Jesus Christ and gave evidence of the power of Holy Scripture as it is taught with skill and discernment. It was a momentous scene for those who knew the relationship of the preacher and the praying woman in the front row. (Benson, 1998, pp. 6-7)

A selected bibliography of Howard G. Hendricks has been provided in Appendix D of this study. Biographical data on the life and career of Hendricks is summarized and included in Appendix E of this study. The message of Hendricks in Christian education is examined in chapter 4 and the ministry of Hendricks is explored in chapter 5. Table 2 provides a summary of the major epiphanies in Hendricks's life:

Table 2

*Major Epiphanies in the Life and Career of Howard G. Hendricks*

Event/Experience	Date	Decision	Results
1. Conversion	1933	He put his faith in Christ.	It transformed his life.
2. College/Career	1942	He chose Wheaton College over Northwestern.	He went into ministry instead of medicine.
3. Graduate School	1946	He chose to attend Dallas Seminary instead of staying at Wheaton College.	He chose not to do graduate work with his mentor, Merrill Tenney.
4. Doctoral Program	1952	He chose to attend Yale Seminary, after a summer of graduate work at Wheaton, but God led him back to Dallas to teach Christian education at the seminary.	He missed out on the opportunity to work with some of the leading religious educators of the day, but he was able to start a new department.
5. Career Decision	1986	He chose to stay at Dallas Seminary for the remainder of his career in education.	He founded the Center for Christian Leadership.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE MESSAGE OF HENDRICKS IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

#### Foundational Issues in Christian Education

Christian education is distinct from traditional education in both its perspective and purpose, and yet it shares many common elements with its secular counterpart. This sometimes uneasy alliance has often created tension in the theological application of Christian education, and it has fostered much debate in the academic discipline of religious education. Questions regarding the nature of truth, the message of the Bible, the role of the church, and the influence of social science theory are but a few of the philosophical tensions that have fueled these debates.

In this chapter, an overview of the basic tenets of evangelical Christian education and secular education is provided in order to compare their philosophical beliefs in the foundational areas of ontology, epistemology, and axiology. A model of evangelical Christian education is presented and then compared to the educational philosophy of Howard Hendricks for analysis and evaluation. A summary of the data is given at the end of the chapter.

Table 3 provides a comparison of the presuppositions of secular education at the end of the 20th century with the views of Christian religious education (Gangel, 1981; Hitchcock, 1982; Pazmiño, 1997; Roper, 1975) in the philosophical areas of ontology (being), epistemology (truth), and axiology (value):

Table 3

*Philosophical Presuppositions of Educational Theory*

	Ontology	Epistemology	Axiology
Secular Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God does not exist (or His existence can not be proven).</li> <li>2. Humans evolved by natural processes over great periods of time.</li> <li>3. Humans and their environment determine what is real.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Truth is empirically defined.</li> <li>2. Knowledge is discovered by humans through the intuitive process of personal experience.</li> <li>3. Reality is subjective and truth is relative.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Moral principles, social values, and personal ethics are relative.</li> <li>2. The relative value of education is measured in terms of actual and potential benefits in this present life.</li> </ol>
Evangelical Christian Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God is infinite and eternal. He is the creator of all life.</li> <li>2. Human beings are created in the image of God.</li> <li>3. God is sovereign and He defines reality.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All truth is God's truth.</li> <li>2. Knowledge is revealed by God through the physical universe (natural) and through the teachings of Scripture (special).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Moral values and personal ethics are sourced in God's Word.</li> <li>2. The value of biblical education extends beyond present benefits because it is eternity-centered.</li> </ol>

*Note.* Adapted by the author from the sources cited in this chapter.



Roper (1961) has asserted that “it is impossible to define education without implying an educational philosophy” (p. 53). Articulating a philosophy of education is a complex but necessary task in order to identify the goals, justify the methodologies, and evaluate the results of an educational experience. It is especially important for Christian educators to “affirm those biblical insights that provide the essential authority for theory and practice” (Pazmiño, 1997, p. 9).

Biblical and theological ideas comprise the foundation of the Christian educator’s belief system as it relates to educational theory. These foundational ideas are molded into a philosophy of education which directs the teaching-learning process in its practical application. Chadwick (1982) defined philosophy of Christian education as, “a statement of the essential basic principles which when put together provide the rudder to guide and govern the educational aims and the total curriculum or program” (p. 39).

It is important to understand that the core belief system of Christian education is distinct from that of its secular counterpart. Gangel (1991) elaborated on this important distinction:

To be sure, Christian education owes a great debt to the social sciences—and in the framework of a secular university, that would be its normal home. But a secular university cannot provide the natural habitat for Christian education; its absolute link to Scripture pushes the social sciences to step-child status. (p. 14)

Couchman (1994) further described Gangel’s (1991) assessment of Christian and secular education:

Christian education, he contends, is not the same as a secular education. For him, the adjective descriptor “Christian” puts a different emphasis on the task of Christian education. Gangel believes that a major difference between Christian and secular education is in the way these two approaches define truth. (p. 50)

Couchman (1994) has also recognized the different assumptions regarding the nature of truth between secular and Christian education. He observed that “such differences, however, do not necessarily interfere with the discovery of truth but rather how the truths discovered are used” (p. 1). This perspective makes the integration of secular findings with the truth of Scripture an essential feature of Christian education. This is possible because of the belief that all truth is God’s truth. Integration is the use of truth in Christian education regardless of the source of that truth (Couchman, 1994).

Gangel (1988) expressed his position on the concept of integration in both the title of his article “Biblical Integration: The Process of Thinking Like a Christian” and in the following three steps that he outlined in the article:

1. Know the Scriptures intimately. Integration of any kind can never rise from theological ignorance.
2. Study the culture diligently. One cannot bring this study of culture to any kind of fruition without running that evaluation through a distinctly biblical grid, an impossibility if he or she has too frail a familiarity with the Scriptures.
3. Analyze events and issues theologically. The Christian teacher has committed himself to thinking in a context which defines morality in terms of biblical absolutes and subjects all conclusions to Lord and Word. (pp. 76-78)

In arguing for evangelical educators to incorporate insights from other disciplines into both theory and practice, Pazmiño (1997) warned that “such incorporation, however, is subject to the continuing authority of God’s Word as found in Scripture” (p. 9). He continued:

Christian educators have been conscious of the need to balance concerns for both continuity and change. Continuity is affirmed in emphasizing essential biblical truths that have guided the Christian faith and educational ministries throughout the centuries. Change is affirmed in emphasizing the need for applying theological truths in relation to specific historical, cultural, social, and personal variables. This effort requires careful reappraisal of biblical and theological sources, as well as evaluation of the various trends that are confronting the wider society and world. (p. 10)

To this end, Wyckoff (1955) has also expressed his desire that Christian educators would “come to the place where we can establish a process of Christian education that has real validity and integrity for our day” (p. 17). He further described the process of integration by noting that “it involves ability to see and interpret the relationships between religion and other phases of one’s life, between religious knowledge and other types of knowledge” (p. 22).

Integration in Christian education is not a chocolate coating on secular education, but rather the “living union of not only concepts with concepts, of truth with Truth, but the living union of the subject matter with life—the eternal, infinite pattern of God’s written Truth woven together with all truth” (Chadwick, 1982, pp. 54-55).

The process of integration is not simply adding a religion course to a secular curriculum. Chadwick (1982) clearly demonstrated this view:

Christianity, far from being a Bible-department religion, has a right to control everything that takes place in all the departments within the institution. The principles of the Word of God apply to all subjects and all areas of life and therefore, to some extent, should alter the course of instruction. (p. 58)

Pazmiño (1997) described the importance of integration in determining the nature of truth from a variety of sources in the following way:

The Christian educator is called upon to creatively combine and integrate insights from various disciplines in the thought and practice of education. Educational thought and practice have incorporated insights from such diverse studies as fine and applied arts, economics, political science, life sciences, physical sciences, systems theory, management theory, engineering, and mathematics. This reality supports the proposition that all truth is God's truth. The Christian educator can incorporate God's truth wherever it may be revealed in the created world in ways that reflect upon humanity's God-given creativity. (p. 13)

The fundamental distinctions between Christian and secular education originate at the philosophical level. Therefore, the investigation of these philosophical beliefs is crucial to understanding their differences in theory and practice. Pazmiño (1997) has reminded Christian educators that "a careful exploration of foundations is essential before specifying principles and guidelines for practice" (pp. 12-13). This study has explored the areas of ontology, epistemology, and axiology from secular and Christian education

viewpoints.

### *Ontology*

Ontology literally means the “study of being.” This type of study asks the philosophical question, “What is real?” Ontology is sometimes grouped in a division of philosophy referred to as metaphysics (Pazmiño, 1997). Included in this category are the related disciplines of theology (the study of God), anthropology (the study of humans), and cosmology (the study of the universe).

The study of secular education in 20th-century America should center on the person and philosophies of John Dewey. His legendary status among American educators is evidenced by the amount of attention he has garnered from both his critics and his supporters. It would not be unreasonable to agree with Towns (1975) that Dewey has had a greater influence on modern education in America than almost anyone else. Gangel and Benson (1983) have asserted that “American education is essentially the product of John Dewey’s craftsmanship” (p. 291). Roper (1975) emphasized that “Dewey’s educational philosophy is consistently related to his overall philosophical system” (p. 311).

Hitchcock (1982) has noted that Dewey was probably the most influential philosopher in the field of education in American history. Dewey was a philosopher, author of the original *Humanist Manifesto* in 1933, and longtime professor at Columbia University. Hitchcock said of Dewey that “no one had more influence over the theory and practice of public education in the United States in the twentieth century” (p. 13).

Principles of secular education are based on philosophies of a secular world view. Hitchcock (1982) described the implications of espousing a secular world view with the

following argument:

To call someone secular means that he is completely time-bound, totally a child of his age, a creature of history, with no vision of eternity. Unable to see anything in the perspective of eternity, he cannot believe that God exists or acts in human affairs. Moral standards, for example, tend to be merely those commonly accepted by the society in which he lives, and he believes that everything changes, so that there are no enduring or permanent values. (pp. 10-11)

Gangel and Benson (1983) explained that “one cannot begin to define the purpose of education unless one understands what about the universe is actually real and how reality affects the meaning of existence” (p. 294). The secular view is described with terms such as naturalism, determinism, and relativism. Their god is chance or fate. Their hope is in humanity, not in some distant deity.

Dewey’s view of reality favored naturalism over supernaturalism. His philosophy, therefore, “ruled out the God of the Bible, an absolute in ethics and moral accountability, immortality and the resurrection, and a supernatural Christ” (Roper, 1975, p. 317). In the following quote, Roper (1975) discussed Dewey’s view of reality:

The heart of this whole issue is the fact that Dewey did not allow for any supernatural being because it would inveigh against the principles of the scientific method. A transcendent God cannot be the object of any empirical verification. He cannot be omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient because there are no absolutes. In short, God, as such, cannot exist. (p. 317)

In direct contrast, the evangelical position on reality begins with God and His

written word, the Bible. Ultimate reality resides in the eternal God Himself. The existence of the God of the Bible “is the unprovable and assumed presupposition of all educational endeavors undertaken by those who rest their faith in the personal God of the universe” (Gangel, 1981, p. 31).

Hendricks (1991) related his position on the difference between secular and Christian education in regards to the question of reality:

Secular education assumes that human observations and interpretations are the basis of reality. Christian education assumes that since God is the Creator and Sovereign of all, he alone is the interpreter of all. All things serve him and are sustained by him. He guides history. Thus the very foundation of knowledge is different for the Christian educator.

The effect is dramatic, as telling as the difference between astronomy studied from a sun-centered versus earth-centered theory of the solar system. God-centered education puts all history into the right perspective; it brings meaning to literature, respect and sanctity to life, standards and authority to decisions about social problems, and direction to philosophy. (p. 17)

Jastrow (1978), writing from the perspective of a secular scientist, summarized this quest for reality with the following illustration:

For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries. (p. 116)

## *Epistemology*

Epistemology, the study of knowledge, “deals with the essence of knowledge and how one knows what is true” (Gangel, 1981, p. 32). Epistemology addresses the philosophical question, “What is true?”

The search for truth leads the secular philosopher down the road of relativism. Because the secularist does not believe in absolutes, knowledge is empirically deduced through the use of the scientific method. According to Roper (1975), Dewey’s philosophy implied that “knowledge is not simply a set of facts or a piece of descriptive information. Knowledge and thinking are instruments by which men manipulate the world about them” (p. 311). Unfortunately for the seeker of knowledge, as T. W. Ward (1982) succinctly stated, “we are all mortal. Error is an inherent accompaniment of human inquiry. Truth is there; we perceive through less than perfect lenses” (p. 106).

Jastrow (1978) offered these candid observations on the myth of scientific objectivity:

Theologians generally are delighted with the proof that the Universe had a beginning, but astronomers are curiously upset. Their reactions provide an interesting demonstration of the response of the scientific mind—supposedly a very objective mind—when evidence uncovered by science itself leads to a conflict with the articles of faith in our profession. It turns out that the scientist behaves the way the rest of us do when our beliefs are in conflict with the evidence. We become irritated, we pretend the conflict does not exist, or we paper it over with



meaningless phrases. (p. 16)

Nevertheless, Roper (1975) revealed Dewey's belief in the objectivity of science when he wrote, "Science, to be truly scientific, must be completely dispassionate in its methods and therefore can attribute no value or reality to a thing which may be discovered" (p. 312). For Dewey, experience is the source of all knowledge, while ideas and facts are the instruments for manipulating experience. Facts are valuable only as they produce hypotheses for action. Roper (1975) described this process in the following way:

Since any item of knowledge has validity only to the extent that it is wedded to ongoing experience, it follows logically that the value of any fact is not resident in the fact itself, but in its ability to work and alter existing situations.

Therefore, knowledge is not the accumulation of isolated facts to be salted away in the mind for future reference but a method for integration and survival.

Instrumentalism is not a philosophy of knowing, but of doing and living, hence the progressive shibboleth, "We learn by doing." (p. 313)

Gangel and Benson (1983) summarized Dewey's philosophical view of truth and the process of change:

In keeping with his emphasis on the process of change as inevitable, Dewey's concept of truth was extremely relativistic. An idea or a concept is not true because it properly discloses reality but because it happens to serve in a utilitarian way to enable the organism to adjust to its natural environment. The truth accumulated by previous generations is not a valid guide to contemporary life because of the phenomenal changes that have taken place between then and now. (pp. 294-295)

Gangel (1981) described the evangelical position on epistemology by writing that “the means of knowing truth for church education is God’s revelation, both natural and special” (p. 32). Couchman (1994) summarized this position as follows:

Christian epistemology, says Gangel, must be revelation centered. Knowledge of the truth is gained through natural and special revelation. By natural revelation is meant what can be known about God through nature. Special revelation refers to what can be known about God through Scripture. Scripture, according to Gangel, is the heart and core of Christian epistemology because it contains instructions for humankind. (pp. 57-58)

Hendricks (1991), in his characteristically descriptive style, illustrated his position on the importance of revelation for the Christian educator with these words:

In Christian education we deal with the transcendent. Secular education deals only with the human. Christian education discusses the eternal, secular education the here and now.

Reason, the main staple of secular education, can go a long way, even in a Christian setting. It can assimilate and integrate and see the implications of what God reveals. But in our night drive into understanding, revelation is the headlights and reason the wheels; revelation helps us see the way that reason must follow.

Without revelation, in fact, the most important things in life are missed: without revelation, you cannot reason your way to the resurrection. Without revelation you cannot reason your way to the Trinity. Without revelation, you cannot reason your way to sacrificial love. (p. 16)

## *Axiology*

Axiology is the study of values, which naturally follows and flows out of the study of ontology and epistemology. After determining the essence of reality and the nature of truth, axiology asks the philosophical question, “What is of value?”

Pazmiño (1997) has noted that “the relationship between axiology and education can be explored by considering different value systems affecting the purposes and goals of education. Both metaphysical and epistemological issues interact with these axiological perspectives” (p. 97). He emphasized the importance of axiology for education by writing that “intentionality, integrity, and honesty are fundamental to any educational efforts which claim to be Christian because the standards of truth apply to all levels of conception, planning, and action” (p. 97).

The study of axiology may be divided into the study of ethics (moral principles and practices) and the study of aesthetics (beauty and creativity). The focus of this study has been on values as they relate to ethics in education. Gangel (1981) has written that

because of his metaphysical position, the axiology of the secularist demands that his education be for the benefit of the present. For the Christian, on the other hand, the question of values occupies a much more broad and important position in his educational philosophy. Indeed, the entire structure is built on the premise that the purpose of education is to nurture individuals toward Christian maturity. All of life is really a preparation for eternal life. (p. 33)

The Bible teaches that Christians are *in* this world but not *of* this world (John 17:14-18) and that the true citizenship of a Christian is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). As a

result, “many Christian values may seem pointless in this society, but the Word of God reminds its readers that no man lives to himself and no man dies to himself. The values of the cross and the eternal city are not relative values” (Gangel, 1981, p. 34).

Roper (1975) summarized the secular position on morals as represented by the writings of Dewey:

Dewey began with the premise that morals should be an intrinsic part of human conduct. His point was that morals can only be wedded to human experience if they are disentangled from supernatural rootings. Thus there are no transcendental moral principles and eternal verities. For centuries, Dewey believed, men had wasted their time in efforts to find a set of immutable moral truths to which human nature could be conformed. Their efforts were futile because all of life tends toward flux and change, and moral truth is constantly subject to adaptation and revision. Moral principles can be changed as their truth becomes obsolete. Since morals cannot be regarded as dogmatic, actions cannot be regarded as right or wrong in themselves; time and circumstances alter all. (pp. 317-318)

Dewey’s relativistic view of values was also emphasized by Gangel and Benson (1983):

The norm of value then is an individual’s own experience rather than some distinction placed upon an item by parents, teachers, or society in general. Dewey’s conclusion was that there are no degrees of value and that we cannot put any particular order to values. (p. 295)

For the Christian educator, values must be eternity-centered. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Christian educator to teach biblical values in the classroom and stress their importance for all of life. The relative values of secular educators can be avoided by stressing the omniscience of God and the eternal value of his revealed knowledge (Couchman, 1994, p. 59).

Hendricks (1991) commented on the eternal perspective of Christianity with these words:

Christian education has the authority to speak about more than this visible world, the world that is passing away. Secular education can focus on business and money, matter and molecules, people and issues, but the Christian educator can move beyond to the soul, the human spirit, life after death, the kingdom of God, the return of Christ, the final judgment—things that last. (p. 17)

For Hendricks, (1991), the call to be a Christian educator is the highest of all callings. His perspective on the unique role of Christian education is as follows:

Pastors and Christian educators are likely to feel like second-class educators, people who “merely” teach the Christian faith, while “real” educators are out there shaping the world.

Nothing could be further from the truth. So periodically, I like to remind myself and other Christian educators and pastors about the difference between secular education and our calling. Ultimately, I believe that it’s like the difference between being a physician of the body or a physician of the soul. (p. 16)

## Educational Philosophy of Howard G. Hendricks

Various authors and theorists have proposed a number of models of Christian education for the purposes of comparison and evaluation. Elias (1986) examined several theological models before settling on a classification scheme with the following five models: orthodox, liberal, neo-orthodox, radical, and revisionist. Concerning these models, Elias offered the following analysis:

Theological models of religious education attempt to deal with two major realities:

- (1) a theological world view which includes a view of the religious tradition and a view of contemporary human existence. This reality includes the context of theological understanding and the five theological movements described above;
- (2) a view of how this tradition is made accessible to or critically appropriated by individuals in the religious community. In the second reality are contained certain implications for determining the aims of religious education and the nature of the teaching-learning process, as well as some implications for the role of the teacher and learner within the model. (p. 39)

Burgess (1996) wrote that the use of models as a means of analysis “offer[s] significant promise for helping religious educators to seize appropriate opportunities for better understanding, for fostering desirable change, and for communicating with one another” (p. 19). He identified four models of 20th-century religious education and six categories for analysis and evaluation of these models. In this study, the evangelical model that Burgess suggested was compared with a model of Hendricks’s philosophy. Table 4 summarizes the core beliefs of each model:

Table 4

*Comparison and Application of Models of Educational Philosophy*

Common beliefs shared by evangelical model and Howard G. Hendricks	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Bible provides the norm for Christian education.</li> <li>2. Communicating God's Word is the central purpose of Christian education.</li> <li>3. Teaching is supernaturally assisted by the Holy Spirit.</li> <li>4. Acceptance of the Gospel is necessary for individual salvation.</li> </ol>	
Application of common beliefs in each model	
Evangelical	Howard G. Hendricks
1. The Bible is the source of authoritative revelation for theory and practice.	1. The Scriptures set forth basic absolutes that apply in every area of life.
2. Both aim and content are concerned with the transmission of a unique message derived from the facts of revelation.	2. The Christian educator is an instrument of revelation who imparts to people the grandest and most vital truths of life.
3. The primary teaching task is to fully and faithfully transmit the message to learners.	3. The Christian educator aspires to transform learners into the image of Christ.
4. Learners will then live out the implications of the message with respect to Christian living and eternal destiny.	4. Learners should be compelled to a deeper commitment to Christ and a greater obedience to God's Word.

*Note.* Adapted by the author from *Models of Religious Education* by H. W. Burgess.

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The evangelical model that Burgess (1996) has described is based on the writings of several 20th-century theorists. Among them are contemporary colleagues of Hendricks such as Lois LeBar, Kenn Gangel, and Roy Zuck. Burgess identified this model as a 20th-century revival of the historic prototype model that “represents an effort to recover and maintain the spiritual dynamic of the early church” (p. 185). The priority of theology and the belief that authoritative revelation is normative for both theory and practice are emphasized by Burgess as unique to this model.

Elias (1986) referred to the evangelical model as orthodox. He mistakenly takes Gangel to task for appearing to substitute evangelical theology for any and all educational theory. His opinions reflect those of some secular scholars and religious educators, as found in the following statements:

In this view of religious education teachers do not have to be guided by the research of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Goldman, since the landmark truths of Scripture are revelations of reality and open to persons of all ages. Proponents also argue that educators should not rely on educational philosophy since the Scriptures present all the educational philosophy that needs to be known.

It is clear that in this orthodox model of theological education contemporary understandings of human experience and educational theory have little to offer the religious educator. The dominant religious truths and the dominant educational emphasis come from an understanding of the Scriptures. This theory is committed to a particular understanding of Christian faith and does not make extensive use of scholarly disciplines other than theology. It also takes a rather narrow view of the



nature of theology and the task of religious education. The contemporary situation is not appraised in this view. The biblical tradition is absolutized and not criticized. The function of theology as praxis is not adequately considered. According to principles presented above on theological understanding, this approach does not represent true theological understanding nor education. (p. 40)

Many critics of Christian education have confused the authoritative message of the Bible with an authoritarian method of teaching. LeBar (1958) described biblical developmental theories of education that raised some of the same concerns as secular theorists. She drew upon the writings of such educators as John Comenius, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and John Dewey while opposing the teachings of Johann Herbart. For her, however, the master teacher was Jesus Christ, and the definitive source of educational theory was the Bible.

Gangel (1981) wrote that Christian education should be based on God's Word and that anything else is man-centered. But he clearly advocated the knowledge and use of secular theories that complement Scripture without contradicting its message. He has emphasized that all truth is God's truth and that the authoritative message of the Bible does not require a totalitarian and dictatorial method of expression. He wrote:

Without giving in to the premise of Dewey and his disciples, evangelical educators in the church can recognize the validity of some of their methodological conclusions. Dewey's talk about activity, interest, discussion and friendliness in the learning situation was not theological heresy but educational sense. (p. 36).

Gangel and Benson (1983) offered the following succinct summary of the evangelical position of educational philosophy as it relates to secular theorists:

The importance of secular thought in an analysis of a Christian philosophy of education is based on the premise that all truth is God's truth wherever it is found and by whomever it is spoken. Consequently, we measure the philosophical viewpoints of the secularist against the opposite polarity, Christianity, and, more specifically, evangelical Christianity. (p. 15)

For Howard Hendricks, the distinctions between secular and Christian education exist at the fundamental levels of perspective and objective. Christian education has a decidedly eternal perspective, and its objective is to transform people into the image of Christ (Hendricks, 1991).

Hendricks (2000) has based his personal philosophy of education primarily on his own study of Scripture. He described his philosophy in these words:

My personal philosophy of education is primarily biblical. It revolves around the person and the work of Jesus Christ. It embraces the personalized ministry of the Holy Spirit, dispatched to guide us into all truth. It fleshes out the fact that we are created in the image of God; therefore we are creative; therefore we have relationships; therefore we have responsibilities. All of which grow out of what I would call the basic components of my Christian education philosophy.

It has developed, I would say, immeasurably over the years primarily as a result of my own personal Bible study. In my judgment there is no greater teacher than Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, often we study the Bible only in terms of content,

never in terms of methodology. Whereas the Scripture said [that] not only what he said but what he did was inspired of God. So this gives me a pattern for study, and my teaching has been revolutionized to concentrate on the life of Jesus Christ to discover how did he teach. If he's the world's greatest teacher then he's got the most to contribute to me.

But that's grown over a period now of almost 50 years. So every single time, for example, [that] I teach I bring more to the teaching situation by virtue of this continual study.

The basis of Hendricks's educational philosophy was formed by his personal study of the Bible and the example of the master teacher, Jesus Christ. One of Hendricks's favorite verses, Luke 6:40, records these words of Jesus: "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher" (New American Standard Version). This is a verse that forces Christian educators to take their vocation seriously as they realize the influence they have on the lives of their students.

While the foundation of Hendricks's educational philosophy is based on his own study of Scripture, he has developed a style of teaching that utilizes his gifts and gleans appropriate wisdom from a variety of sources. The author of this study remembers many occasions when Hendricks would exhort a classroom full of seminary students to expand their mental frames of reference by reading literature that espoused viewpoints that differed from the familiar conservative, evangelical views. He wanted his students to know what other people were saying and to be able to think and reason through their own personal philosophies.

Regarding other persons who have helped to shape his educational philosophy and influence his teaching style, Hendricks (2000) said:

I have had many mentors who have probably been, at least in my judgment, the best teachers I have ever had. I had a professor by the name of Merrill Tenney, a Harvard graduate, who was probably one of the leading New Testament exegetes of the last century. And he made a profound influence on my life, primarily by the way he taught and the convictions he had about teaching. So as a mentor, you know, I'll never be the same as a result of my exposure to him.

And I think the same could be said of many other individuals who made a profound impact. I would say John Dewey had a great contribution, not because I bought everything, but because I learned that he had memorized the four gospels, [and that he] thought Jesus Christ was the greatest teacher. But [Dewey] felt that you couldn't produce what [Jesus] wanted to produce on his foundation, that is, of supernaturalism. So he transferred it more to a naturalistic philosophy. But many times when you're reading his books you come to realize that he was greatly influenced by Jesus himself. And I think he was a breath of fresh air. I wouldn't buy into everything that he taught but certainly a lot.

Comenius, in church history, was so far in advance of his time. And everything I have read about him and of him further stretched my thinking on something that was primarily built around the student. So that, for example, as a part of my philosophy I feel if the student doesn't learn, the teacher hasn't taught. And so the primary responsibility is not just on the student—he has one—but its on

me. And I've got to ask, "How can I motivate this student; how can I find out what is it that turns him on; what are his basic needs; how can I build on the foundation he has; how can I help him to cooperate with his learning style which I believe God has created in him; and how can I help him [to] accomplish his ultimate vocational goal."

Hendricks has emphatically stated that the primary influence on his teaching style was the person of Jesus Christ. He outlined his thoughts on the master teacher by describing the man, Jesus Christ, as being (a) congruent; (b) reality-oriented; and (c) relational. He then defined the message of Jesus as (a) revealed; (b) relevant; (c) authoritative; and (d) effective. He related the motives of Jesus's teaching as (a) love; (b) acceptance; and (c) affirmation. Finally, Hendricks described the teaching methods of Jesus as being (a) creative; (b) unique; (c) engaging; and (d) developmental (Hendricks, 1988a). From these observations, and their implications for contemporary education, Hendricks has fashioned his personal philosophy of teaching.

Howard Hendricks has stated that his favorite course to teach is Bible Study Methods, a course that is on the degree plan of every Dallas Seminary student. The gist of this course is related in his book entitled *Living by the Book* (Hendricks & Hendricks, 1991). In this work, he described the three essential steps to studying the Bible. They explain the means by which a person may approach the Bible and achieve a deeper understanding of its content. In his opinion, the use of these three steps will change the lives of those who employ them in a personal study of the Bible. He outlined these steps in the following manner:

### 1. Observation.

In this step, you ask and answer the question, *What do I see?* The moment you come to the Scriptures you ask, What are the facts? You assume the role of a biblical detective, looking for clues. No detail is trivial. That leads to the second step.

### 2. Interpretation.

Here you ask and answer the question, *What does it mean?* Your quest is for meaning. Unfortunately, too much Bible study begins with interpretation, and furthermore, it usually ends there. But I'm going to show you that it does not begin there. Before you understand, you have to learn to see. Nor does it end there, because the third step is . . .

### 3. Application.

Here you ask and answer the question, *How does it work?* not, Does it work?

People say they're going to make the Bible "relevant." But if the Bible is not already relevant, nothing you or I do will help. The Bible is relevant because it is revealed. It's always a return to reality. And for those who read it and heed it, it changes their lives. (Hendricks & Hendricks, 1991, pp. 35-36)

Perhaps the clearest and most definitive summary of Hendricks's educational philosophy is to be found in the 1987 book and companion video series entitled *The 7 Laws of the Teacher*. The many years of his teaching experience are distilled in seven "laws." The book contains many references to John Milton Gregory's classic work entitled *The Seven Laws of Teaching*. Tables 5 and 6 summarize both sets of laws:

Table 5

*John Milton Gregory's Seven Laws of Teaching*

1. The Law of the Teacher.  <i>The teacher must know that which he would teach.</i>
2. The Law of the Learner.  <i>The learner must attend with interest to the material to be learned.</i>
3. The Law of the Language.  <i>The language used in teaching must be common to teacher and learner.</i>
4. The Law of the Lesson.  <i>The truth to be taught must be learned through truth already known.</i>
5. The Law of the Teaching Process.  <i>Excite and direct the self-activities of he pupil, and as a rule tell him nothing that he can learn himself.</i>
6. The Law of the Learning Process.  <i>The pupil must reproduce in his own mind the truth to be learned.</i>
7. The Law of Review and Application.  <i>The completion, test and confirmation of the work of teaching must be made by review and application.</i>

*Note.* From *The Seven Laws of Teaching* (Rev. ed.) by J. M. Gregory. Copyright 1954 by Baker Book House.

Table 6

*Howard G. Hendricks's Seven Laws of the Teacher*

1. The Law of the Teacher.  <i>If you stop growing today, you stop teaching tomorrow.</i>
2. The Law of Education.  <i>The way people learn determines how you teach.</i>
3. The Law of Activity.  <i>Maximum learning is always the result of maximum involvement.</i>
4. The Law of Communication.  <i>To truly impart information requires the building of bridges.</i>
5. The Law of the Heart.  <i>Teaching that impacts is not head to head, but heart to heart.</i>
6. The Law of Encouragement.  <i>Teaching tends to be most effective when the learner is properly motivated.</i>
7. The Law of Readiness.  <i>The teaching-learning process will be most effective when both student and teacher are adequately prepared.</i>

*Note.* From *The 7 Laws of the Teacher* by H. G. Hendricks. Copyright 1987 by Walk Thru the Bible Ministries. Adapted with permission of the author.



Another key component of Hendricks's philosophy of education is a commitment to the mentoring process. Throughout his educational career, Hendricks has taught and lived this philosophy as a relationship experience. He has emphasized discovering personal needs at the start of the mentoring process (Hendricks & Hendricks, 1995). Before seeking a mentor, Hendricks suggested that individuals should set some goals and objectives with plans concerning how to accomplish them, then decide what price they are willing to pay. Persons should also know themselves and examine how they learn.

Becoming involved in a mentoring relationship does not just happen. Both persons involved in the relationship should be prepared to maximize the experience. Hendricks & Hendricks (1995) have recommended the following as questions for a mentor to consider:

1. Is this person goal-oriented?
2. Is this person actively seeking a challenging assignment and greater responsibilities?
3. Is this person an initiator?
4. Is this person teachable or eager to learn?
5. Is this person willing to assume responsibility for growth and development?

Hendricks saw examples of discipleship and mentoring in the Bible and began to adapt his own principles and practice. He focused on motivational teaching, discipleship, and leadership training. He has taught and published in the popular idiom to provide usable tools for the educators who are thrust into the battle on the front lines of debates. He has chosen to communicate his ideas in workable forms, easily adapted for personal needs. Table 7 summarizes some of these ideas on mentoring:

Table 7

*Hendricks's Principles on the Mentor Relationship*

The benefits of having a mentor
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A mentor promotes genuine growth and change.</li> <li>2. A mentor provides a model to follow.</li> <li>3. A mentor helps you reach your goals more efficiently.</li> <li>4. A mentor plays a key role in God's pattern for your growth.</li> <li>5. A mentor's influence benefits others in your life.</li> </ol>
The marks of a mentor
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A mentor seems to have what you personally need.</li> <li>2. A mentor cultivates relationships.</li> <li>3. A mentor is willing to take a chance on you.</li> <li>4. A mentor is respected by others.</li> <li>5. A mentor has a network of resources.</li> <li>6. A mentor is consulted by others.</li> <li>7. A mentor both talks and listens.</li> <li>8. A mentor lives a consistent lifestyle.</li> <li>9. A mentor is able to diagnose your needs.</li> <li>10. A mentor is concerned with your interests.</li> </ol>

*Note.* From *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship* by H. G. Hendricks & W. D. Hendricks. Copyright 1995 by Moody Press.

## Summary

The message of Howard Hendricks in Christian education may be summed up by the philosophy explained in this chapter, but the essence of his message is in the dynamic of his personality as he expresses those laws in the classroom. Hendricks attributes that dynamic to the superintending work of the Holy Spirit. Regarding this concept, he wrote:

In Christian education the Holy Spirit is ultimately orchestrating the learning experience, in which I am but a participant. He, not me, oversees the classroom. He is the master teacher, not me. He is the medium of communication, the giver and transmitter of truth, and I am the personality he is animating. (Hendricks, 1991, p. 18)

This classroom dynamic can be clearly seen in the following quote from one of his former students, Bruce Wilkinson, in the foreword to Hendricks's book, *The 7 Laws of the Teacher*:

Why did I and so many, many other students take every class we possibly could from this one man? Because he cared. He cared about each one of us as individuals and as future communicators. He cared about the whole process of excellent communication. Yes, he cared about us, and it showed in every word he spoke and every movement he made. The fact is, he was not so much teaching a course as he was ministering to his students.

That's why, when I did my master's thesis on using revolutionary teaching methods in presenting an overview of the Old Testament, I relied on Dr. Hendricks as my adviser. And that's why, when we launched Walk Thru the Bible Ministries

as an outgrowth of that thesis, I asked Dr. Hendricks to serve on our board of directors. He continues to inspire and challenge me in that crucial role.

You see, every class Dr. Hendricks taught in my four years in seminary was so motivating and helpful that we students used to think that, by the time we were seniors, just maybe once he would be boring. “Maybe today he’ll lay an egg,” we’d josh with one another. Well, we’re still waiting.

Toward the end of my final year in seminary, I decided to test Prof Hendricks. I came in the classroom, sat in the back row, and determined not to pay attention. I just looked out the window into the parking lot. I was going to time him to see how long he could cope with a student who wasn’t with him.

. . . Prof had a routine in starting every class. He sat behind his desk, and you could watch his leg start bouncing at about three minutes until the class started, as if he were getting wound up and ready to go. At the stroke of the hour, he would open his mouth and start speaking. And we were off. And he’d sit there for about eight minutes, teaching. At that point, he’d get up from his desk, go to the board, and draw a great chart. Then he’d tell a pertinent joke and go on with his outline.

But this day, I just looked out the window. And he was out from behind his desk in under one minute. He was drawing terrific charts on the board, and I was doing my best not to copy them down. Then he started telling jokes. Lots of jokes. And I tried my hardest to keep from laughing. Then he moved to the corner of the room, directly in my path, gesturing wildly. But still I stared out the window.

At the three minute, 37-second mark, he was running down the aisle toward

me, screaming, “Wilkinson! What on earth are you looking at?” So I apologized and started paying attention. And I didn’t tell him about my little experiment until years later.

You see, Dr. Hendricks was so committed to seeing his students learn that it drove him to distraction if he was failing in that commitment. And he would do whatever it took to get that one student back on track in the learning process.

That’s dedication. No, that’s *teaching*. (Wilkinson, 1987, pp. 15-17)

This chapter has presented the message of Howard Hendricks in Christian education by first examining the philosophical foundations of Christian education and then comparing an evangelical model of education with the personal philosophy of Hendricks. Chapter 5 describes the ministry of Hendricks through the words of some of those who studied under him or worked as colleagues alongside him. Chapter 6 contains a summary of the entire study and offers conclusions and implications for further research.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE MINISTRY OF HENDRICKS IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS

#### Case Study Research

A good case study brings a phenomenon to life and helps to illustrate its meaning. A case study is one of several design traditions in qualitative research (Gall et al., 1996). Most case studies are interpretive in nature and eclectic in design. Furthermore, a case study is defined by the phenomenon that is researched, not by the methods of inquiry used. “Thus, some researchers focus on the study of one case because of its intrinsic interest, whereas other researchers study multiple cases in order to test the generalizability of themes and patterns” (Gall et al., 1996, p. 544).

Creswell (1998) has offered the following definition:

*A case study* is an exploration of a “bounded system” or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. This *bounded system* is bounded by time and place, and it is the *case* being studied—a program, an event, an activity, or individuals. *Multiple sources of information* include observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports. (p. 61)

Case study research is a type of qualitative design that follows the postpositivist tradition of relying on “multiple methods as a way of capturing as much of reality as possible” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 9). The researcher takes the data gathered from

these empirical materials and then constructs a qualitative interpretation. There is no single interpretive truth for making sense of one's findings, making this process both artful and political (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 30). Denzin (1998) elaborated on this concept:

In the social sciences there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself.

Confronted with a mountain of impressions, documents, and field notes, the qualitative researcher faces the difficult and challenging task of making sense of what has been learned. I call making sense of what has been learned *the art of interpretation*. This may also be described as moving from the field to the text to the reader. (p. 313)

In discussing the writing process involved in a qualitative study, Denzin (1998) wrote that:

Interpretation is a productive process that sets forth the multiple meanings of an event, object, experience, or text. Interpretation is transformative. It illuminates, throws light on experience. It brings out, and refines . . . the meanings that can be sifted from a text, an object, or a slice of experience. (p. 322)

Qualitative research seeks to know how and why behavior occurs. The focus is on the process through which behavior occurs (McMillan, 1996, p. 240). The study of this process is complex and requires sifting through reams of data before patterns emerge.

The use of multiple sources of information in data collection allows for layers of analysis that create a detailed picture of the case study (Creswell, 1998). It is important in case study research to obtain a substantial amount of data to represent the phenomenon and to observe the phenomenon in its natural context (Gall et al., 1996, p. 547).

This chapter builds upon the life history research that was presented in the previous two chapters of this study. Due to the subjective and personal nature of the data that was collected for use in this chapter, the author has chosen a case study approach to present the findings.

In this case study, the phenomenon that was researched involved the relationship of Howard Hendricks with selected persons and the resulting impact of that relationship in their lives and careers. The potential total number of current and former students, friends, colleagues, and family members presents a very large and diverse population to be studied. Rather than designing a survey instrument to be randomly distributed and statistically analyzed, the author organized the data to be studied into two areas of concentration.

The first area of concentration is topically displayed. The ministry of Hendricks focused on his relationship with individuals as a mentor and as a motivator. This topical approach allowed for more thick descriptions (Denzin, 1989b), personal stories and anecdotes, detailed accounts, observations, and opinions to be obtained from a variety of sources.

The second area of concentration involved the use of a typical approach. The ministry of Mel Sumrall in founding Denton Bible Church was studied as a type or example of how the influence of Howard Hendricks in the life of one of his students can affect the philosophy and practice of that student's life and ministry. While the use of a typical case study may be employed to generalize the findings to other cases (Gall et al., 1996, p. 578), no generalizations were made concerning other students of Hendricks based on this study. Personal application of these findings is up to the individual reader.



## Hendricks as a Mentor

In assessing his tenure at Dallas Seminary, Howard Hendricks commented, “I’ve spent these 50 years primarily in discipleship and mentoring, and I think that’s where my greatest contribution has been” (“A Lasting Legacy”, 2000, p. 1). The man known around the campus of Dallas Seminary as “Prof” for decades continues to teach in the classroom and to minister throughout the campus into the year 2001.

Howard Hendricks has made a lasting imprint in Christian education through his 50 years of teaching at Dallas Seminary. However, the following quote reveals what his greatest legacy could be:

[It] might be that he has mentored—and continues to mentor—leaders who are mentoring still others. The ripple effect emanating from Howard Hendricks is providing vitality, integrity, and faithful guidance to the body of Christ.

Dr. Hendricks mentored DTS president Chuck Swindoll, *Walk Through the Bible’s* Bruce Wilkinson, author and pastor Tony Evans, and hundreds of other shepherds in the church. (“Howard Hendricks,” 2000, p. 3)

In reflecting on the early days of his career at Dallas Seminary, Hendricks (1998b) offered the following comments:

We used to sit on a bench outside of Stearns Hall, and I’d go out and just sit down and pretty soon two, three, four students would come and we’d get a conversation going—question and answer, discussion of various subjects—and after awhile there would be 30 or 40 students gathered around. And this would go on sometimes for hours. So those were truly halcyon days and very motivating to me, a teacher.

I could hardly wait to get into the classroom. I mean I lived to teach and, of course, that hasn't changed that much.

Whether teaching in the classroom, conversing with students outside on a bench, sharing lunch in a campus dining hall, or mentoring one-on-one, Hendricks has always been motivated by "teachable" students. This motivation for ministry has remained constant over the years. In his own words, Hendricks (1998b) related the following:

My son Bob said, "When I preach and teach I expend energy and when you teach and preach you derive energy from the experience." And that's probably an accurate assessment. I particularly respond to teachable students. I couldn't care less how much they know, but if they want to learn I am very, very attracted to them and delight to spend hours of time with them.

The only thing that's added to my motivation is that I've been in it long enough now to see so many people go out of the seminary and who regard that I was the greatest influence in their life. And today many of them have gone way beyond where I am and have been most effective in areas that I would not be qualified to function in. So I have no greater joy than that my children walk in truth, as John said, and that's my deep motivation.

One former student of Howard Hendricks is now his boss, Charles Swindoll, president of Dallas Seminary (to be named chancellor of the seminary in May 2001). A personal and poignant story of their relationship was related by Swindoll in a letter included in Appendix F of this study. Swindoll has often referred to Hendricks as his mentor and friend:

In early 1960, as I was finishing my first year at Dallas Theological Seminary, I took a course from Dr. Howard Hendricks that would mark my life and ministry forever. Day after day I listened to his presentation, then I would rush back to our little campus apartment stimulated with fresh excitement and plunge into the homework he assigned. As weeks turned into months, the fog that had surrounded the Scripture slowly began to lift. Those puzzling passages no longer seemed so intimidating. As bigger pieces fell into place, I felt increasingly more comfortable with the Word of God.

In today's terms, the Bible became "user friendly," thanks to this course that was destined to change my life. Dr. Hendricks convinced us that the Bible could be understood. Unfortunately, it often seems intimidating to the average person; it is a long book with lots of fine print and very little visual interest. He gave his students techniques that, when perfected by practice, opened up the Bible to us. Before that year had passed, the mystery dissolved into meaningful and reasonable truths. I soon discovered that my wife, Cynthia, and I were not merely talking about God's Book, we had started living by the Book.

During the more than thirty years that have passed since my whole perspective changed, I have often thought how wonderful it would be if everyone could take the same course . . . if somehow my mentor could touch their lives as significantly as he had touched mine. I would muse, *What a difference it would make if all God's people could get hold of the techniques and principles necessary for the cultivation of their own spiritual nourishment.* (Swindoll, 1991, pp. 5-6)

Another former student, Joseph Stowell, president of Moody Bible Institute, once told Hendricks, “Prof, you changed the whole course of my life” (“A Lasting Legacy,” p.

1). Regarding his influence in the lives of his students, Hendricks (1998b) has admitted:

Everywhere I go I encounter people who say, “You changed the course of my life.”

And, unfortunately, sometimes I can’t even remember their names or remember that they were students in my class. Apparently God has given me the ability to inspire others to go on and do what perhaps they never believed they could do. Chuck Swindoll says I was the one who believed in him when he didn’t believe in himself. And I would say that’s been a distinctive of mine. God has given me the ability to see people, not simply in terms of what they are, but in terms of what they are to become.

His influence is not limited to the lives of past and current students. Family, friends, and colleagues have been affected as well. Giesen (2000) has noted that

his mentoring, however, reaches well beyond the younger students. Professor Jim Slaughter describes co-teaching with Hendricks. “Whenever it was my turn to teach, he would be there in class and would even take notes. He made me feel that I was important and had something valuable to contribute.” Slaughter speaks for many. (p. 4)

Long-time friend and colleague Donald K. Campbell is professor emeritus of Bible Exposition at Dallas Seminary. Campbell also served as academic dean for decades and was Dallas Seminary’s third president from 1986-1994. Campbell followed Hendricks as a student at Wheaton College and then at Dallas Seminary during the 1940s.

Looking back over more than 50 years of friendship, Campbell (1998) offered these thoughts on Howard Hendricks:

He was a year ahead of me. He was the leader in his class. I was the leader in my class. We found ourselves in competition, in a friendly way, but a lot of class rivalry entered into that. I recognized immediately [that] he was a man who was well liked by his peers. He was not in those days particularly outgoing, as far as his personality was concerned, but [he] was friendly. And that friendship deepened, of course, when he came to seminary and I followed him.

[I was] working with Hendricks, who had this vision for a department of Christian education, which was an entirely new thing at Dallas Seminary. In fact, in the early days, Christian education, which was then called religious education, was considered to be something of an adjunct of liberal theological education. Evangelical seminaries were really not giving much attention, if any, to the subjects that are properly involved in the field of Christian education.

Dr. Hendricks persuaded Dr. Walvoord that this was a legitimate avenue of pursuit, and he began to teach certain courses [for] which it was my responsibility to help him create. And then in a very few years he and I sat down and mapped out a major in the field—a department with a major—and I presented that to the Board of Regents of the seminary, and that was approved. And Dr. Hendricks's career was launched.

We had a very close personal, family relationship. His four children and my four children pretty much grew up together. [We] attended the same church.

Howie and I had lunch together—we had a bag lunch—almost every day of the week. And we had a lot of discussions about theology, ministry, and specifically the field of Christian education.

He had been to Biblical Seminary in New York where he had pursued some graduate education. I asked him to review with me some of the things he had learned there, particularly in the field of methodical Bible study, under Robert Traina. I benefitted a great deal from that mentoring experience.

Noted evangelical scholar and author Warren S. Benson (1998) described the influence of Hendricks on him as a student at Dallas Seminary in the following way:

I met HGH initially in the Methods of Bible Study class at DTS. I will always believe that this is his greatest course, even superior to his vaunted Family and Pedagogy courses. His love for Scripture was readily evident. His fresh handling of the Bible, his gracious and powerful responses to students's questions, and the excitement he brought to the teaching task, impacted our data base, but more importantly, our lives. You must remember that at this point in his career he was not nationally known. We knew him as the Coca Cola Counselor. After class he was AVAILABLE. We talked with him at the Coke machine. (p. 1)

Hendricks has taught and mentored students, colleagues, athletes, business leaders, and pastors over the years. Certainly not every student of Hendricks was able to be mentored by him. Nevertheless, speaking as one of his former students, this author can remember his availability to meet with students after class, in his office, or around campus. His busy schedule limits his availability, but his students remain his highest priority.

## Hendricks as a Motivator

The second area of concentration in this chapter focuses on the influence of Howard Hendricks in the lives of others through motivation. Motivation is an essential factor in Hendricks's sixth law of the teacher, the law of encouragement.

Wlodkowski (1985) has written about "the use of motivation as a constant positive influence during learning activities" (p. x). In his text he wrote that, "if we match two people of the same exact ability and give them the same exact opportunity and conditions to achieve, the motivated person will surpass the unmotivated person in performance and outcome" (p. 3).

Learners are motivated by several factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Inner motives, the learning environment, the subject matter, and the instructor, are just some of the areas in which a learner's motivation may be affected. Hendricks uses encouragement as one of his major means of motivating others. Giesen (2000) recorded the following comments on this subject:

Encouragement to be the way God made them has been a lifeline. When Don Regier said, "I can't preach. I don't know what I am going to do," Hendricks convinced him that he had creative gifts. Regier has now directed the DTS audiovisual department for three decades. Professor Eddie Lane remembers when he and Tony Evans were the first African-American students on campus. "When my wife and I would go to meetings, it was Dr. and Mrs. Hendricks who made us feel at home and comfortable," says Lane. "Dr. Hendricks made it clear that he was glad to have us in his classroom." (p. 4)

Gene Getz, in his seminal work, *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*, wrote the following acknowledgment to Hendricks:

To my close friend and colleague, Dr. Howard Hendricks, goes special thanks for assigning me the responsibility of coordinating this team effort. I'm deeply appreciative of the freedom he has given me to explore, reconstruct and rethink this foundational course in the light of Scripture, history and contemporary culture.

(Getz, 1974, pp. 11-12)

Former student and Christian counselor, Waylon Ward, thanked Hendricks in print with these words:

I also want to thank Howard Hendricks, the head of the Christian Education Department at Dallas Theological Seminary. Under his supervision, I completed my master's degree, and with his encouragement, I stepped out into a full-time counseling ministry. "Prof" is a dear friend and counselor, and I am deeply indebted to him for his counsel and advice. (W. O. Ward, 1977, p. 6)

On the time he spent teaching with Hendricks from 1974-1978, Warren Benson (1998) remarked:

He . . . consistently lifted me up with the students. . . . In some ways, HGH could have been very intimidating to me. However, he constantly put me at ease and was a great encourager. It was a delight to team-teach with him. (p. 2)

The constant refrain that ties these stories together is that of Hendricks as an encourager. His ability to recognize potential in others is matched by his determination to see that potential reach its fullest measure in their lives and careers.



Kenneth Gangel, an evangelical scholar and prolific author for the past 3 decades, wrote of his relationship with Hendricks:

There are two people who have been Dr. Hendricks' peers in the field of Christian education yet never his students—Gene Getz and myself. Certainly Hendricks has been a great model for all of us, but my own personal career was most influenced by his invitation to succeed him as the Chairman of Christian Education at Dallas Seminary, an invitation proffered in 1977 but not culminated until 1982.

(1998, p. 2)

Hendricks was mentioned in the story of 27-year-old Kelly Williams, founding pastor of a church specializing in outreach to “Generation X”:

“My DTS professors have had a profound influence on my life, especially Drs.

Howard Hendricks, Daniel Wallace, John Hannah, Robert Pyne, Bill Lawrence, and Timothy Warren. They challenged me to live the truth and teach it in a way that changes lives in positive ways.” (“Graduates Start Church,” 1998, p. 3)

Dave Cox, a 1961 graduate of Dallas Seminary, has been a missionary in Brazil for more than 30 years. He reflected on his student days:

“[I will] never forget the Christian education class I took from Dr. Howard

Hendricks. . . . God used it to nurture my vision of equipping others with His Word, as Dr. Hendricks had done with me.” (“Graduate's Ministry,” 1998, p. 1)

Andrew Bentley, a physician in family practice who was encouraged to attend Dallas Seminary during his residency, has traveled three times to Africa as a medical missionary. On the impact of Hendricks's teaching, Bentley said, “How can you not enjoy

Dr. Hendricks? He makes you want to learn.” (“Seminary prepares,” 1998, p. 4).

The impact of Howard Hendricks was felt in Japan by a young couple in ministry who came to America for further training. Their story was told in the following words:

Karen and Mitsu were in full-time ministry in Japan when they decided Mitsu needed further training. They took a leave from work—and there was no question about the choice of schools.

“We were influenced by the books and tapes of men like Dr. Swindoll and Dr. Hendricks,” says Karen. “We also liked the fact that at DTS, you study every book of the Bible.” (“Student Called,” 1999, p. 2)

The previous examples demonstrate the influence of Hendricks in the lives of both men and women—from different generations, social backgrounds, and nationalities. In each story the facts differ, but the results carry the common theme of changed lives. The influence of Hendricks, whether through tapes, teaching, or discipling, was a contributing factor in major life decisions for each person.

These stories provide a broad view of the lives and careers of various individuals whose ministries varied in size, scope and location. The purpose of their inclusion was to show the breadth of Hendricks’s motivating influence on others by providing examples of their lives and ministries.

In the following section of this study, the focus narrows to the story of one man, Mel Sumrall, and his pastoral ministry at Denton Bible Church. The purpose of this aspect of the case study was to reveal the depth of Hendricks’s influence through the unique story of one of his students.

## Denton Bible Church

The narrative accounts that follow have been arranged to construct a descriptive analysis of the story behind the development of Denton Bible Church and its founding pastor, Mel Sumrall. The story begins with a vignette (Creswell, 1998, p. 186) of Sumrall and ends with one of Denton Bible Church.

Themes that emerged included Sumrall's personal journey in ministry, the mentor relationship between Sumrall and Hendricks, the Scriptural principles that Sumrall applied from Hendricks's teaching, and the growth and development of Denton Bible Church. Conclusions are offered by the author in the chapter summary. Generalizations are left for the individual reader to make.

### *The Story of Mel Sumrall*

The following narrative was taken from a missions prayer calendar for the month of March 1998, produced by Denton Bible Church as a bulletin insert. Its purpose here is to introduce Mel Sumrall to provide a vicarious experience for the study of his life and ministry (Creswell, 1998, p. 186). The text is as follows:

Pastor Mel Sumrall was born on September 21, 1925 in the tiny West Texas town of Weinert. He was born the youngest son of Jerry and Amanda Marie Sumrall. Mel remembers growing up during the Great Depression in Ennis, Texas where his father struggled to provide for the family of four. Shoes with holes in the soles and patches on overalls were commonplace in the Sumrall home. It was during the economic depression of the 1930's that Mel recalls seeing his father crying at the kitchen table. Those were days when strong men couldn't find the work they

needed to provide food and clothing for their families. Eventually Mel's father was hired to work in Colorado for the WPA and the family moved along with him, but not before Mel came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as his savior in a Sunday school class at the First Baptist Church in Ennis, Texas. Unfortunately as Mel grew into a strong young man no one stepped in to do the important work of discipleship in his life. At the age of fifteen Mel's father died leaving him broken and hurting. He remembers the pain of watching the casket lowered into the grave and his father's request that he be the first of the Sumrall's to graduate from high school. Two years later in 1943, at the age of seventeen, Mel decided to leave high school and enlist in the United States Marine Corps. After completing his basic training in San Diego, California he was shipped out to the South Pacific to take part in the island hopping campaign designed to defeat the Japanese. In terms of character development Mel regards his training in the Marine Corps as being the most significant of this lifetime. At one point he remembers being on a troop transport along with several thousand other Marines when their ship was attacked by submarines. When the alarm sounded the hatches on the ship were sealed leaving the Marines in their sleeping quarters several decks below the water line. The Marines spent the next several hours in extreme frustration wringing their hands and digging at the hatches until their fingers bled. The hours in the darkness left Mel with a lifelong struggle against claustrophobia. When the war came to an end Mel returned home with enough money from the G.I. bill to attend the University of Colorado where he received a degree in mechanical engineering.

It was during his freshman year while standing in the registration line that he first saw Patricia L. Ross, the young lady he would spend the rest of his life with.

Together they would raise five beautiful children; Susan, Jerry, Karen, Laura, and Pamela.

After graduating from the University of Colorado Mel went to work for CF&I steel as a metallurgist. Mel remembers being consumed by the challenges that faced him as he worked as a foreman in charge of production. As Mel dedicated more and more time to his work they rewarded him with promotions, a larger salary, and a higher level of responsibility. He recalls that there was little time for things like church. He imagined that the work to be done and the equipment at the plant was too valuable not to receive his attention seven days a week. At the age of forty Mel had a large home, a stable income, five healthy children and a wonderful wife. He remembers thinking that he had achieved every goal he set for himself, yet he couldn't escape the mysterious sense of loneliness that seemed to pervade his life. It was at the age of forty that Mel received a telephone call from his wife saying that their youngest daughter had suddenly become very ill. Within several hours Mel and Patti watched their daughter succumb to a deadly virus that doctors were unable to treat effectively. Mel recalls being a mental, emotional, and physical wreck for a lengthy period of time as he began to rethink the purpose and significance of his life. It was during this period of intense trial that Mel made a serious commitment to the God whom he had known as a boy. Mel credits his rapid growth to the efforts of Ron Chadwick, a school teacher in his community

who had graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary. It was this experience with discipleship that convinced Mel of the importance of making a lifetime commitment to seeing that others received proper training from ministry. After working for twenty five years for CF&I Steel, with just five years left until his retirement, Mel made a difficult decision to attend seminary in Dallas. Mel recalls coming to terms with the idea that serving Christ by obeying a call to receive pastoral training was more important to him than making money or maintaining the social status he had acquired as a successful executive and school board president.

Mel remembers his seminary years as being both difficult and a true source of blessing. The training he received there worked to reaffirm his conviction that proper training and discipleship are essential to the health of a Christian. During Mel's last year of working on the Masters Degree in Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary he started Denton Bible Church with twelve people. He spent close to ten years helping pastor the church and since that time has channeled the majority of his efforts into developing a foreign missions program for Denton Bible Church. The Bible Training Center for Pastors program focuses on training national church leadership by equipping pastors to minister in their native countries. (Denton Bible Church, 1998)

Although Sumrall retired as pastor emeritus of Denton Bible Church on September 21, 2000, he and his wife Patti continue to live in Denton and remain active in missions work. The major epiphanies in the life of Mel Sumrall that developed his character and shaped the course of his ministry are outlined in Table 8.

Table 8

*Major Epiphanies in the Life and Career of Mel Sumrall*

Event/Experience	Age	Decision	Results
1. Conversion	8	He put his faith in Christ.	He lived as a nominal Christian.
2. Father's Death	15	His father made a dying request.	He was left broken and hurting, but he fulfilled his father's wish.
3. Marine Corps	17	He enlisted in the Marine Corps after high school.	He received valuable training and character development.
4. Pamela's Death	38	His youngest child died suddenly from a deadly virus.	He was devastated and sank into a deep depression that lasted for 18 months.
5. Discipleship	38 to 40	He was mentored by Ron Chadwick in Christian discipleship.	His faith grew rapidly and he became convinced of the need for Christian discipleship.
6. Seminary	48 to 52	He became the oldest student and graduate of Dallas Seminary.	He majored in Christian education under Howard Hendricks.
7. Ministry	51 to 75	He founded Denton Bible Church in 1976, during his last year of seminary.	The church has grown from 12 members to more than 3,000 in the past 25 years.

### *Sumrall's Personal Journey of Faith*

Mel Sumrall came to faith in Jesus Christ at the age of 8, while attending a Baptist church in the small, blue-collar town of Ennis, Texas. He remained in Baptist churches until he came to Dallas Seminary and founded Denton Bible Church. Sumrall's faith did not grow substantially during this time, because other facets of life pushed his religion into the background. He married, raised a family, and worked long hours.

At the age of 38, having achieved all of his goals in life, Sumrall was successful, yet strangely unfulfilled. This comfortable existence was shattered on one dramatic and powerful day when his life literally fell apart. This would be the defining moment, the watershed experience in the life of Mel Sumrall. He described that time:

I had come to know Christ when I was 8 years old but had not grown as a Christian between ages 8 and 38. So when a very devastating event occurred in our lives it was very traumatic for all of us. My wife took one of our children to the doctor one morning, and we watched her die that afternoon of a devastating virus disease.

After Pamela died I went through a deep depression and needed some spiritual help. At that time the Lord sent by a disciple of Howard Hendricks by the name of Ron Chadwick. [He] discipled me for about 18 months. During that time we talked a good deal about Howard Hendricks and the Prof's impact on his life.

When Ron left after 18 months I began to look at the possibility of leaving the steel mills and coming to seminary. I went to several churches in the Colorado area where Prof was talking and there heard him on quite a number of occasions.

I remember one time that Prof and his wife, Jeanne, were up at Glen Eyrie, and



my wife and I drove from Pueblo up to Colorado Springs and we spent an evening with them out to dinner. One of the things I was concerned about talking with Prof about was what would he think about my coming to seminary. At that particular time I was in my early 40s.

And I remember one bit of advice that Prof gave me that I have passed on to hundreds of men since. Prof said to me, “If you come to the seminary you must be led by the Holy Spirit. That is the reason for you to come, not because you think that Howard Hendricks wants you to come. Because times are going to get tough, and when things get tough you have to know that you are in the center of God’s will.” (Sumrall, 1998)

#### *The Relationship Between Sumrall and Hendricks*

Sumrall referred to that meeting with Hendricks as being a turning point in his life. It was a major decision for him to leave a successful career, with only 5 years left to his retirement, and move to Dallas for 4 years of training as a full-time graduate student.

Sumrall eventually did go to Dallas Seminary, becoming the oldest student to enter the master of theology program at the age of 48. He majored in Christian education and took several courses from Hendricks, including Bible Study Methods and Marriage and the Family. The course on how to study the Bible revolutionized Sumrall’s thinking and approach to the interpretation and application of Scripture. The course on marriage and family transformed his personal life. He was especially appreciative of the relationship that Howard and Jeanne Hendricks modeled in front of his students.

Concerning his relationship with Hendricks during his student days at Dallas

Seminary, Sumrall (1998) offered these comments:

I felt that Prof was there for me, that I could go to see him. And he would help me in any way he possibly could. But while I was at seminary, I didn't have a very close relationship with him. I wish [that] I had been able to but I wasn't able to for many reasons. Number one, there were people by the hundreds [who were] trying to get in to see him. I remember one time, for example, I had a daughter who was going through a marriage difficulty. And it was so serious for me that I thought I was going to have to drop out of seminary and go try to help in that situation. I wanted to get in to see Prof and I couldn't get in to see him [because] there were so many people lined up ahead of me.

Now if Prof had known what the situation was, he would have made time for me. But I didn't want to impose on him that way, so I didn't. I went to see another man on the campus there, but Prof was really the one that I was trying to see. So I really didn't have that close of a mentoring relationship with him on campus. I was in his home one time, I think, in 4 years.

These last statements by Sumrall reveal the experience that is familiar to most of Hendricks's students. The ideal mentoring relationship requires frequent personal contact over a period of time. Benson (1998) offered these thoughts on Hendricks: "That availability aspect had to change. While he was always friendly and warm toward me, his growing reputation nationally and internationally demanded that the role as Coca cola counselor HAD to change" (p. 1).

Always a popular figure on campus, Hendricks added a demanding speaking

schedule to his teaching and administrative duties, and the remaining time for students had to be meted out in small increments. Nevertheless, current students have access to him through appointments scheduled during office hours, and former students may arrange to see him when on campus or in various ministry situations in the field.

While these types of contacts may not be ideal for sustaining a mentoring or discipleship relationship, they do not preclude such a situation from developing. Even though Sumrall was not close to Hendricks during his student days, their relationship was such that Sumrall considered Hendricks to be his mentor and felt that he could call upon him if needed.

Taken from the writings of the ancient Greek poet, Homer, the term *mentor* refers to the counselor of Telemachus, and may be defined as “a wise and faithful counselor” (*New Webster’s Dictionary*, 1986). By this definition, a mentor is one who is both able and faithful to impart wise counsel to another. No period of time is specified, and no minimum number of contacts is suggested. The emphasis is on the relationship between the two parties and on the exchange of helpful information.

For example, Sumrall learned information about how to treat his wife and children in the course on marriage and the family, but he also saw those principles modeled in the relationship between Howard and Jeanne Hendricks. Sumrall received additional counsel about philosophy of ministry from the scriptural lessons that he gleaned from Hendricks’s Christian education classes. These principles would later form the philosophical foundation for the formation of Denton Bible Church.

### *Scriptural Foundations of Denton Bible Church*

Coming out of Baptist churches, where the emphasis of ministry was evangelism, Sumrall learned the principles of discipleship under Hendricks that had been developed in his earlier relationship with Ron Chadwick. The scriptural truths that he learned from Hendricks revolutionized his thinking and directly impacted his ministry. Sumrall (1998) told this story:

My major was in Christian education, and Dr. Hendricks was the major professor. So I had an opportunity to take many courses from him. Some information that I picked up from him—I suppose I should say [that] I caught from him—was, I had remembered that years earlier when I was in my church in Colorado, I would look at my pastor and see all the things that he was doing. We had a coal burning furnace in the church, in the basement. The pastor would come up on Saturday evenings, and he would build the fire and stoke the fire. He mowed the grass. He did the evangelism work. He did about everything, and the people did practically nothing. And I remember asking the Lord one time, here I am as a production superintendent for steel plants. I have all these people to help me get my job done. I had maintenance men, electrical, mechanical, cost people, quality control people, sales—all these people to help me get my job done in the steel mills—and I wondered why the Lord didn't give the pastor somebody to help him. Well, when I got in Prof's courses I found out that the Lord had indeed made provisions for that.

These provisions that Sumrall spoke of are outlined as foundational principles in Table 9:

Table 9

*Foundational Principles of Denton Bible Church*

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1. Make Disciples of All Nations</i></p> <p>And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>2. Equip the Saints to Do the Work of the Ministry</i> Matthew 28:18-20</p> <p>And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. . . . speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>3. Train Others in the Truth</i></p> <p>And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. <span style="float: right;">2 Timothy 2:2</span></p>

*Note.* Scripture cited from the New American Standard Version.

### *The Story of Denton Bible Church*

As a senior at Dallas Seminary, in his 4th year of graduate study, Mel Sumrall decided to start a church in Denton, Texas. Sumrall had other offers—his age of 52 was considered advantageous for pastoral ministry—but he could not find a church that would let him focus on his passion for discipleship. He wanted to disciple the men of the church and then train them to do the work of the ministry.

Sumrall's (1998) commitment to discipleship was based on his personal experience and backed by the three scriptural principles that he had learned from Hendricks. Sumrall described the founding of Denton Bible Church with the following comments:

Those were three key verses that I saw on a very practical basis that would impact my ministry in the future. After I graduated from Dallas Seminary, the last year, I traveled to Denton and began a church. And the question I had was, "What kind of church am I going to build, by God's grace; what is going to be the emphasis?" And I kept coming back to those three things—those three passages. When I did, in fact, start the church, those three scriptural emphases that Prof had given me were the three that, essentially, we used to build Denton Bible Church.

When we started Denton Bible Church we had about a 100 people after awhile, after maybe a year, and about 95 % of those people were students at [the University of] North Texas, and about 75-80 % of those students were music majors at North Texas. So had I had choir, for example, all the music majors would have been in the choir. I wouldn't have had anybody to start a discipleship program and to start building that kind of a ministry that Prof had told me about.

Regarding the interpretations of these three passages, and their application to the local church, Sumrall (1998) offered these remarks:

It was very unusual, in that I had never heard anybody who had the kinds of biblical interpretation that he used, for example, equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry. I had never heard of such a concept. I was in a Baptist church. [I was] raised in a Baptist church. And I always knew that we would go out and do evangelism. But I didn't know anything about making disciples. It was not practiced in any churches that I knew anyplace.

When I graduated from seminary there were many places that I could have gone to be a pastor. But I couldn't find a church, at that time, that would let me have a ministry of discipling men. There were many churches that would let me be a pastor, and I would do the visitation, I would do the normal things that normal Baptist preachers do. But it was not discipleship in any way. Nor could I find anybody who would let me push this whole idea of equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry. So that's why we started Denton Bible, because I wanted to build a church built on discipleship. And I didn't know anyplace [that] I could go to do it unless I started one from scratch.

From its humble beginnings in 1976, Denton Bible Church has grown from a handful of people meeting at the Optimist Gym to over 3,000 adults and 1, 000 children who meet weekly on a multi-building campus built entirely debt-free in northeast Denton. At the end of 2000, the church employed 27 full-time and 15 part-time staff, supported by contributions of more than \$4.3 million for the year (Denton Bible Church, 2000).

## Summary

Several factors have undoubtedly played key roles in the phenomenal growth and success of Denton Bible Church over its 25 years of existence. The scriptural principles that provided a philosophical foundation, the belief in biblical inerrancy, the practice of fiscal responsibility, the commitment to children's and youth ministry, the strict adherence to biblical qualifications for elders, the emphasis on corporate prayer, and the expository messages delivered from the pulpit are some of the factors that are responsible for the growth of Denton Bible Church.

In 1977, Sumrall hired an enthusiastic young athlete, Tom Nelson, as associate pastor. Nelson had played high school football in Waco, Texas, and graduated from the University of North Texas in Denton, where he played quarterback for their football team. Nelson was a recent convert to Christianity, having come to faith in college, and he went to Dallas Seminary from 1977-1982, where he studied under Howard Hendricks.

Nelson's gift for preaching lent a strong presence in the pulpit and allowed Sumrall to pursue his passion for discipleship through the church's missions program and Bible training centers. For the past 2 decades Nelson has served as the senior pastor of Denton Bible Church. In addition to preaching three Sunday services, Nelson teaches two weekday Bible studies and leads an intensive discipleship training program for young men in the church. Thus, Sumrall's passion for discipleship training, first experienced through his mentor relationship with Ron Chadwick and then confirmed through his studies under Hendricks at Dallas Seminary, continues through the ministry of Tom Nelson in the lives of his young disciples at Denton Bible Church.



In this chapter, the ministry of Howard Hendricks has been examined by looking at his influence in the lives of others as a mentor and as a motivator. A case study of Denton Bible Church, explored through the perspective of founding pastor, Mel Sumrall, was included to show the impact of Hendricks's influence in the life and ministry of one student. The following statements are offered as conclusions by the author based on the findings of this chapter:

1. Hendricks was enthusiastic about teaching his students.
2. Hendricks was available for his students outside of class.
3. Hendricks cared about his students as persons.
4. Hendricks inspired and challenged his students to realize their potential.
5. Hendricks motivated his students as an encourager.
6. Hendricks illustrated creativity in the classroom.
7. Hendricks modeled Christian character as a lifestyle.

These statements are not intended to be exhaustive in nature nor definitive in their application to each student of Howard Hendricks. They do, however, reflect the opinion of the author based on the data gathered for this chapter and observations made from personal experience. Chapter 6 summarizes the findings of the entire study and offers conclusions and implications for further research.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

#### Summary of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced the subject of the study, stated the purpose of the study, established the significance of the subject, defined key terms, and presented the limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter 2 described the methodology employed for the study and reviewed the literature on qualitative research designs and methods of inquiry, and chapter 3 provided an interpretive biography of Howard G. Hendricks. Chapter 4 evaluated the philosophical viewpoints of secular and Christian education and compared them with the educational philosophy of Hendricks. Chapter 5 examined the ministry of Hendricks through the words of selected colleagues and former students and included a case study of Denton Bible Church. This chapter summarizes the study and offers conclusions and implications for future research.

The purpose of this study was to construct a life history of Howard G. Hendricks that focused on his career in Christian higher education by combining an interpretive biography with document analysis and case study research. It was argued that the most accurate measure of Hendricks's contributions to education were found in the teaching philosophy that he practiced in the classroom and in the lives and careers of his students who were motivated by his example. The case study was presented as further evidence to support this position.

The first two chapters laid the groundwork for the remainder of this project by explaining the significance of the study and by demonstrating the need for employing a qualitative research design. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 explored the dimensions of Hendricks's life, message, and ministry through interpretive biography, document analysis, and case study research.

The interpretive biography of Hendricks showed the difficult circumstances that he faced growing up as a child from a poor neighborhood in Philadelphia. By the grace of God and the influence of several key people in his life, Hendricks came to faith in Christ, showed interest and aptitude in education, and became actively involved in his church. His student days at college, his call to ministry, and his educational career were described in terms of the decisions that marked his path and set the course for his life.

The message of Hendricks was examined by comparing his beliefs in the areas of ontology, epistemology, and axiology with a secular model and an evangelical model. His educational philosophy was presented primarily through his three methods for Bible study, his seven laws of the teacher, and the principles of mentoring that he both taught in the classroom and modeled as a lifestyle.

Hendricks's ministry as a Christian educator was displayed topically with quotes, anecdotes, and narrative accounts from various former students and colleagues arranged under the categories of mentor and motivator. Hendricks was described as encouraging, caring, and interested in his students. A case study of Denton Bible Church showed the effects of Hendricks's influence on the life and career of Mel Sumrall through the process of a mentor relationship.

Hendricks was mentioned in this study as being an author, with over 16 books and numerous periodical articles to his credit. His published works, although consulted and often quoted in this study, were not the focus of research for this project. While they have contributed greatly to his general recognition in evangelical circles, they have not been accepted as scholarly research or textbook material. This is due, at least in part, to the popular style that Hendricks employs in his writing.

Hendricks's writing style, like his speaking style, is full of illustrations, anecdotes, catchy phrases, and humor. This is all by design, as he punctuates his message with simple ideas and clear communication. He marks the landscape of his arguments with well-chosen quotes from a wide range of credible sources, and he clarifies each point with a vivid illustration from his experiences. In a recent book, Hendricks (1998a) wrote:

My heart beats for the laborers in the Lord's harvest field. We are not competitors in a public-relations contest or even denominational strategists; we are followers of Christ who need to use this simple explanation to do our jobs better. (p. xiii)

Hendricks as an author in the field of Christian education has not contributed volumes of scholarly research for academic consideration. He chose instead to write in a popular style that would be useful to the average Christian educator working in the field. , However, this does not preclude him from consideration as a scholar.

Gangel (1998) remarked that, "if scholars are best measured by what they know, Hendricks moves to toward the top of the list" (p. 2). He further elaborated that "there are certainly others who have been read by more students. Measured by personal contact and popularity, however, it would be difficult to find a more influential Christian educator in

the second half of the twentieth century” (p. 3). In assessing the ministry of Hendricks in Christian education, Gangel, (1998) a prolific author in the field, offered the following statement:

Though many will strongly disagree, I do not believe the publication of original research is a major issue in practical ministry disciplines as it might be in fields such as archeology, social sciences, and theology. As Christian Education’s “leading salesman” for nearly fifty years, Hendricks has certainly influenced teaching and learning in dramatic ways. One need only listen to some of his former students teach and preach to sense the echo effect. (p. 3)

Another prominent Christian educator, Warren Benson, attributed Hendricks’s lack of scholarly output to his limited access to libraries such as the one at Yale, his biblical frame of reference, and his commitment to teaching and public ministry. Benson (1998) commented on the strengths of Hendricks as an educator:

He reads, he remembers, he thinks analogically, and that is part of his superiority as a lecturer and as an educator. He sees relationships so powerfully. His public speech - pulpit and teaching lectern - is filled with analogies via simile and metaphors that are on target. At times, his illustrations are crafted so finely, almost exquisitely, that they are readily remembered, and at times, almost explode in peoples’ minds. (p. 2)

The importance of Hendricks as an author is not in his research or scholarship. His strength is in simplicity. His creativity is expressed in clear terms, compelling analogies, and powerful illustrations. He emphasizes practical application without technical jargon.

The consensus among those who were interviewed for this study was that Howard Hendricks is a great communicator and highly esteemed as an educator. Gangel (1998) summarized his opinion of Hendricks by stating that “on a platform or in a classroom he is virtually peerless, perhaps one of the greatest speakers and lecturers of our time” (p. 2).

Regarding his ability as an educator, Benson (1998) stated that Hendricks

not only has studied and mastered the art of teaching, he always is alert to the best educators of the past and present, and gleans great ideas for the teaching task. He does not follow the faddish writers and lecturers on teaching, but rather, uses the solid thinkers such as an Eliot Eisner or Paulo Freire, or back to a Jacques Maritain or John Dewey. He was the first one to demand that I read Maritain and Dewey. (p. 3)

Benson (1998) further commented that Hendricks knows the data that Kolb has produced about learning styles. As a student of adult learning, Hendricks “knows the materials of Stephen Brookfield, Patricia Cross, and Malcolm Knowles. He knows Piaget, Kohlberg, and Fowler and their theories of Moral Development” (p. 3).

While Hendricks is highly regarded by many of his peers as an author, educator, communicator, mentor, and evangelical leader, he is not often referred to as a leading scholar or administrator. Both Walvoord (1998) and Campbell (1998) recognized that Hendricks was not gifted as an administrator. Although he was not a technician in his academic pursuits, Hendricks was a master motivator who surrounded himself with gifted persons who could handle the technical demands of running a department. As Christian education’s leading salesman, he has impacted the field as much as any scholar.

### Observations of the Data

In addition to the subjective analysis of Hendricks presented through the narrative accounts, interviews, and case study research, the following observations are offered based on the objective data related to Hendricks's educational career:

1. Howard Hendricks has contributed to the field of Christian higher education through the publication of 16 books, numerous professional periodical articles, several film series, dozens of audiotapes, and two multivolume videotape series.
2. Howard Hendricks has presented hundreds of educational messages at various conventions, conferences, workshops, and corporations across the United States and in over 75 countries worldwide.
3. Howard Hendricks has delivered thousands of lectures and chapel messages to hundreds of students at Dallas Theological Seminary in his educational career.
4. Howard Hendricks has spent his entire 50 year educational career at one institution, Dallas Seminary, where his popularity on campus has remained at a high level into the new century.
5. Howard Hendricks has been cited in this study as being one of the most influential persons in the lives and careers of several students whose ministries and careers range from teachers to pastors to administrators in higher education.

This study has presented Howard Hendricks as a role model for other educators, Christian or secular, in both his educational philosophy and his teaching methodology. Teachers and administrators, pastors and missionaries, parents and students, persons in all areas of education can benefit from the example of Hendricks's life and ministry.

## Conclusions Based on the Findings

Howard Hendricks once described his life story as being a story of the sovereign grace of God. The life history of Hendricks that has been constructed in this study was focused on his contributions to the field of Christian higher education. However, there is much more to the story of Howard Hendricks than his academic achievements. The story of Hendricks is complex, but three themes help to describe this life history.

### *The Legacy of Hendricks*

In discussing the legacy of Howard Hendricks in Christian education, Campbell (1998) noted his work in the areas of mentoring and leadership, but he emphasized the concern of Hendricks for his students and their growth as persons. Gangel (1998) stated that “without question the impact of his life on the lives of immediate students, their students, and their students after them” is Hendricks’s greatest legacy (p. 3).

Hendricks has always been committed to a ministry of multiplication based on scriptural principles (see Table 9). His passion for discipleship is patterned after that of the master teacher, Jesus Christ. However, Hendricks (1991) observe,:

I don’t want to produce cookie–cutter Christians, patterned after my image.

Everyone has a unique personality, gifts, and calling; I want to teach each person to make the most of that uniqueness.

I want people to be resourceful at getting answers from the Word, to learn from their creative God, to find ways to minister to other’s needs, to solve their own problems. I want them to find and apply principles, not formulas, in different settings and situations. (p. 23)



An unbroken line exists between learners and teachers than spans generations of educators and links academic ideas. The effect may be readily seen or hidden for some time. Hendricks (1988b) has asserted that

it takes at least a couple of decades for a person to discover that he was well taught.

All true education is a delayed-action bomb, assembled in the classroom for explosion at a later date. An educational fuse forty years long is by no means unusual. (p. 9)

The line of influence in the life of Howard Hendricks can be traced back to his grandmother, and to Walt, Donald Grey Barnhouse, Merrill Tenney, and John Walvoord. It runs through his life and into the lives of others, including Ron Chadwick, who discipled Mel Sumrall during a crucial time in his life. It continues to extend through Sumrall into Tom Nelson and dozens of future leaders whose impact is years away from being felt.

This ministry of multiplication was the early goal of Howard Hendricks as an educator and continues to provide his greatest impact in education through generations of students and disciples. This unbroken line continues in the present and will undoubtedly extend far into the future. Its importance in the passing on of Christian education from one generation to another should not be underestimated.

Hendricks may not be considered a leading evangelical scholar, but two of his former students, Ron Chadwick and Warren Benson, are published and recognized in the field. Hendricks has never served as president of an institution, but two of his former students who have, Joe Stowell and Chuck Swindoll, credit Hendricks for much of their success. The fuses that Hendricks lit in others continue to burn throughout academia.

### *The Message of Hendricks*

Howard Hendricks has contributed the most to Christian education through his teaching on Bible study methods. Numerous persons, including Hendricks himself, were cited in this study as believing that this teaching had made the greatest impact on their lives and careers. Not only has he taught this course at Dallas Seminary for over 50 years, the teaching is available on audiotape and videotape, as a film series, or in book form.

While his books on teaching and mentoring have also contributed to the field, the impact of *Living By the Book* has been wider in its scope. Not every student at Dallas Seminary is a Christian education major, but every student takes the course on Bible Study Methods. The number of persons who have been taught those principles from Dallas Seminary graduates over the past 50 years is well into the thousands.

Hendricks discussed his feelings on the subject:

It's with a sense of deep privilege that I share my life's passion on paper—that believers who rest their eternal salvation on Christ will hear and heed His written revelation. The study of the Bible is de rigeur for the Christian. More than a duty, it provides protection for the daily battle, comfort for dashed hopes, and continuing education for a life that is worth living. (Hendricks & Hendricks, 1991, p. 8)

Proclaiming the same message for over 50 years, Hendricks has left his mark on the landscape of Christian higher education through his passionate call for observation, interpretation, and application in reading the Bible and living by the book. His words will continue to echo through the mouths of his students for years to come.

### *The Influence of Hendricks*

The findings of chapter 5 in this study revealed the breadth and depth of Hendricks's ministry. Students from across the world were touched by some aspect of his teaching ministry. Hendricks has reached across generations, cultures, ideologies, and beliefs with his clear and practical teaching and with his warm and passionate heart.

Students of Howard Hendricks have helped to spread his influence around the world in a variety of ways. Many students have become pastors and teachers and rely on class notes to teach Bible study methods. They have also learned to use those methods to produce original sermons, lectures, and articles. Missionaries have ventured into new lands or returned to their native lands with material from Hendricks.

Other students cited in this study have impacted the field of Christian higher education as scholars, teachers, and administrators. Hendricks has also served on the boards of numerous Christian organizations and institutions where his voice is heard and respected.

Hendricks has also spread his influence through his relationships with colleagues and lay leaders in the business community. His willingness to become involved in the lives of others outside of academia has greatly enhanced his visibility among diverse populations in the community. His contacts with doctors, lawyers, athletes, and business leaders keeps him well grounded in the midst of our changing culture.

After 50 years as an educator, Howard Hendricks would rather point to the lives of his students as a measuring stick than to the courses he has taught or the books he has written. His legacy lies in the lit fuses that are going off one by one.

### Implications for Future Research

Future research could involve similar studies done on the lives and careers of other educators whose contributions to the field of higher education would be documented through interpretive biography, interviews, document analysis, or case studies. Further research could be done on the contributions of Howard Hendricks to higher education in one of the following ways:

1. A survey instrument could be distributed to a random sample of current Dallas Seminary students to determine the influence of Hendricks in their educational career.
2. A survey instrument could be distributed to a random sample of Dallas Seminary alumni to determine the influence of Hendricks in their professional career.
3. A survey instrument could be distributed to a random sample of Christian educators to determine the contributions of Hendricks in the field of Christian higher education.
4. A survey instrument could be distributed to a random sample of evangelical pastors to determine the influence of Hendricks in their lives and careers.
5. A survey instrument could be distributed to a random sample of Christian missionaries to determine the influence of Hendricks in their lives and careers.
6. In-depth interviews or case studies of students or alumni of Dallas Seminary could be conducted to evaluate the influence of Hendricks in their lives and ministries.
7. In-depth interviews could be conducted with selected lay persons whose lives or careers have been impacted by the ministry of Hendricks.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT

### Informed Consent Agreement

1. I hereby agree to participate in an interview/questionnaire in connection with the dissertation project known as *The Message and Ministry of Howard G. Hendricks in Christian Higher Education*.
2. The process will last about 1 hour and all interviews will be audiotaped. I will be identified by name in any transcript (whether verbatim or edited) of such interview.
3. I am voluntarily participating in this study and I understand that I may withdraw at anytime without penalty or prejudice.
4. All tapes and written questionnaires will be in the immediate possession of the interviewer during the study and will be kept strictly confidential.
5. Responsibility for archiving or otherwise storing the materials used in this study will be at the discretion of the interviewer unless prior arrangements are made.

Interviewee \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

THE PHONE NUMBER OF THE INTERVIEWER IS (940) 484-2978. THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH (940) 565-3940.

APPENDIX B  
INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

## Interview Subjects

The following list identifies the speaker/writer and subject of each interview or set of questions used in this study. They appear in the same order as in Appendix C.

1. The subject is Howard G. Hendricks, principal subject of this study. He is chairman of the Center for Christian Leadership, former chair and distinguished professor in the Department of Christian Education at Dallas Seminary. This is the first of three sets of questions used for two audiotaped interviews of the speaker for this study.
2. The subject is Howard G. Hendricks. This is the second set of questions.
3. The subject is Howard G. Hendricks. This is the third set of questions.
4. The subject is Warren S. Benson, vice president of academic administration and professor of Christian education at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, in Deerfield, Illinois. He responded in writing to this set of questions.
5. The subject is Donald K. Campbell, former academic dean, professor emeritus of Bible exposition, and president emeritus of Dallas Seminary. He served as the seminary's third president (1986-1994).
6. The subject is Kenneth O. Gangel, distinguished professor emeritus of Christian education at Dallas Seminary. He responded in writing to this set of questions.
7. The subject is Jeanne Hendricks, wife of Howard Hendricks for 52 years. She is an author, speaker, and ministry partner with her husband. She responded in writing to this set of questions.



8. The subject is Mel Sumrall, founder and pastor emeritus of Denton Bible Church. He is a former student who left a successful business career to enter Dallas Seminary.
9. The subject is John F. Walvoord, professor emeritus of systematic theology and chancellor emeritus of Dallas Seminary. He served as the seminary's second president (1952-1986).

APPENDIX C  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Initial Interview With Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewer: Larry H. Lincoln

### Personal Background

1. Do you have any distinct memories from early childhood/adolescence/youth that you feel significantly influenced the shaping of your later ministry?
2. Name the most significant people in your life growing up and how they impacted or influenced your life.
3. What kind of a student were you in elementary/high school/college/seminary?

### Academic Influences

4. Name the most important educators who influenced your academic or professional career.
5. What were your academic/professional goals entering college/seminary/career?

### Professional Goals and Motivations

6. What are your goals for ministry today? How have they changed?
7. What are some previous goals you feel significantly shaped your ministry? Were they reached or realized?
8. Describe the beginning of your ministry and your decision to be an educator.
9. How has your family shaped or influenced your ministry goals or direction?
10. What is your major motivation for ministry today?

### General Observations

11. What impressed you most about the world you grew up in?
12. What intrigues you most about the world today?
13. What scares you most about the world of tomorrow?

### Ministry Assessment

14. Describe the beginning of your teaching career at Dallas Seminary.
15. What did you feel was the greatest need of Christian education when you began teaching? What about today?
16. How would assess your ministry over the years in terms of impact on yourself and the world around you?
17. How would you assess your ministry in terms of the lives and influence of your students?
18. In your opinion, what area of Christian living needs the most attention today (i.e., marriage and family, business ethics, moral values, education, evangelism, church revival, etc.).
19. In your opinion (based on personal observation, comments by family, friends, colleagues, students, etc.) to what do you attribute your success and long tenure in Christian education?
20. What part of your ministry do you find the most challenging? Rewarding?

## Second Interview With Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

### Personal Aspects of Ministry

1. Would you describe, in as much detail as you can remember, the feelings and emotions you experienced in making the decision to pursue a career in the ministry rather than one in medicine?
2. What were the personal circumstances or experiences which led you to leave the pastorate and become a professional educator?
3. Would you relate the personal or professional frustrations which prompted your desire to leave the seminary several times during those early years of teaching?
4. What were the deciding factors which kept you from leaving Dallas and pursuing a doctoral degree at Yale Seminary?
5. What convinced you to spend your career primarily as a teacher, not as a scholar or an administrator?

### Professional Message

Please articulate your response to each of the following statements:

*George A. Coe (1929)*

6. Accordingly, the Christian teacher's practical dilemma takes this form: Shall the primary purpose of Christian education be to hand on a religion, or to create a new world?

7. But the focal point of true education is not acquaintance with the past, it is the building forth of a future different from the present and from the past.

*D. Campbell Wycoff (1961)*

8. The task of Christian education is the nurture of the Christian life.
9. Education is a teaching-learning process, the key to which is learning.

*Randolph C. Miller (1963)*

10. [Christian education] is not secular education with a halo, although the Christian cannot ignore secular insights.
11. The important factor in education is *relationships*. The language by which we communicate the truth of God at work in history and in the lives of men is the language of relationships.

*James M. Lee (1971)*

12. The central point of this book is that religious instruction is a mode of social science rather than a form of theology. Simply stated, the social-science approach regards religious instruction as basically a mode of the teaching-learning process rather than an outgrowth of theology.
13. The religion class is a laboratory and a workshop for Christian living where students learn Christian living precisely by engaging in Christian living in the here-and-now learning situation.

### Third Interview With Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

#### Philosophy of Christian Education

1. Will you explain your personal philosophy of Christian education and how it has developed over the years?
2. Whose ideas or what factors were major influences in shaping your philosophy?

#### Writing for Publication

3. How would you describe your personal style of writing?
4. What are the goals you have in mind when writing for publication?

#### Public Speaking

5. How did you develop your style of public speaking?
6. What factors influence your decisions in determining your speaking schedule?

#### Current State of Christian Education

7. What are the significant trends in Christian education today?
8. In your opinion, who is the most influential Christian educator of our generation?

#### General Information

9. Where do you see the focus of your ministry in the next 5 years?
10. What is the most important advice you could give to the aspiring Christian educator of tomorrow?

## Interview Questions on the Ministry of Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Warren S. Benson

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

### Background and Initial Acquaintance

1. Will you briefly summarize the circumstances which influenced or contributed to your decision to become a Christian educator?
2. What schools did you attend for higher education and why did you choose the seminary or graduate school which you attended?
3. How did you first meet Howard Hendricks and what were your initial impressions of him?
4. Briefly describe your personal relationship with Hendricks over the years.
5. Please describe any events that you observed in Hendricks' life which you feel had a profound impact on his career. If not, do you know of any told to you by Hendricks himself?

### Academic Career as an Educator

6. What is your professional opinion of Howard Hendricks as a Christian educator?
7. How would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of Hendricks as an academician?
8. How would you describe Hendricks' overall impact in the field of Christian education?
9. How would you evaluate Hendricks as an academic administrator?



10. Has your personal relationship with Hendricks influenced your professional career?

#### Academic Career as a Scholar

11. What is your professional opinion of Hendricks as a scholar in the field of Christian education?
12. How would you assess the contributions of Hendricks to the field of Christian education through his published books and articles?
13. How would you explain the popularity of Hendricks as a Christian educator when he is not generally recognized as a contributing scholar in the field?
14. In your professional opinion, who are the leading contributors to the field of Christian education today?
15. In your professional opinion, how would you compare the influence of Hendricks to that of other leading Christian educators in America since 1950?

#### General Observations

16. To what do you attribute the longevity and productivity of Howard Hendricks in his career as a Christian educator?
17. How do you believe Hendricks' career as an educator would have differed had he gone to Yale and studied under educators like Randolph Miller and Paul Vieth?
18. How would you assess the worldwide ministry of Hendricks in education through his articles, books, conferences, and tapes; through his students?
19. How would you describe Hendricks as a practitioner of his own teaching?
20. What do you feel will be the enduring legacy of Howard Hendricks in the field of Christian education?

## Interview Questions on the Ministry of Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Donald K. Campbell

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

### Background and Initial Acquaintance

1. Will you briefly summarize your personal life and the circumstances which influenced or contributed to your decision to become a Christian?
2. Why did you choose to pursue your theological education at Dallas Seminary?
3. What events/circumstances/persons led you to decide on a career in higher education?
4. How did you first meet Howard Hendricks and what were your initial impressions of him?
5. Briefly describe your personal relationship with Hendricks over the years.

### Academic Instruction

6. Describe any significant experiences you had in teaching with Hendricks or in observing him teaching in a higher education setting.
7. Was there anything unique or unusual about the teaching methods of Hendricks that impressed you as a colleague?
8. Do you feel that Hendricks' teaching methods have impacted the field of Christian education?
9. What significant comments have you heard over the years from students or professors concerning either the instructional content or teaching methods of Hendricks?

10. Are you aware of any significant observations by educators from other institutions of higher education concerning the academic career of Hendricks?

#### Academic Administration

11. How would you assess the administrative skills of Howard Hendricks?
12. Are you aware of any significant contributions or innovations in administrative philosophy or practice that Hendricks has made over the years?
13. In what area of academics (instruction, curriculum, research, administration, counseling) do you believe Hendricks has the most strengths? Weaknesses?
14. Has your personal relationship with Howard Hendricks influenced your professional career?
15. Have you witnessed Hendricks influence on any of your colleagues in Christian ministry?

#### General Observations

16. To what do you attribute the professional accomplishments of Howard Hendricks?
17. How would you explain the popularity of Hendricks as a Christian educator when he is not generally recognized as a contributing scholar in the field?
18. How would you assess Hendricks contributions to the field of Christian education?
19. How would you evaluate Hendricks ministry to his students over the years?
20. What do you feel will be the enduring legacy of Howard Hendricks in the field of Christian education?

## Interview Questions on the Ministry of Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Kenneth O. Gangel

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

### Background and Initial Acquaintance

1. Will you briefly summarize the circumstances which influenced or contributed to your decision to become a Christian educator?
2. What schools did you attend for higher education and why did you choose the seminary or graduate school which you attended?
3. How did you first meet Howard Hendricks and what were your initial impressions of him?
4. Briefly describe your personal and professional relationships with Hendricks.
5. Please describe any events that you observed in Hendricks' life which you feel had a profound impact on his career. If not, do you know of any told to you by Hendricks himself?

### Academic Career as an Educator

6. What is your professional opinion of Howard Hendricks as a Christian educator?
7. How would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of Hendricks as an academician?
8. How would you describe Hendricks' impact in the field of Christian education?
9. How would you evaluate Hendricks as an academic administrator?
10. Has your personal relationship with Howard Hendricks influenced your professional career?

### Academic Career as a Scholar

11. What is your professional opinion of Hendricks as a scholar in the field of Christian education?
12. How would you assess the contributions of Hendricks to the field of Christian education through his published books and articles?
13. How would you explain the popularity of Hendricks as a Christian educator when he is not generally recognized as a contributing scholar in the field?
14. In your professional opinion, who are the leading contributors to the field of Christian education today?
15. In your professional opinion, how would you compare the influence of Hendricks to that of other leading Christian educators in America since 1950?

### General Observations

16. To what do you attribute the longevity and productivity of Howard Hendricks in his career as a Christian educator?
17. Do you believe Hendricks' career as an educator would have been more or less effective if he had published original research or proposed innovative theories of teaching and learning?
18. How would you assess the worldwide ministry of Hendricks in education through his articles, books, conferences, and tapes; through his students?
19. How would you describe Hendricks as a practitioner of his own teaching?
20. What do you feel will be the enduring legacy of Howard Hendricks in the field of Christian education?

## Interview Questions on the Ministry of Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Jeanne Hendricks

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

### Background and Initial Acquaintance

1. Will you describe the circumstances which led you to become a Christian?
2. How did you first meet Howard Hendricks and what were your initial impressions of him?

### Observations as a Wife and Mother

3. What was your perception of your husband in your first year of marriage?
4. How has your perception changed over the years?
5. How would you evaluate Howard Hendricks as a husband and father?

### Perceptions as a Ministry Partner

6. Please summarize your personal relationship with Howard Hendricks over the years (you may want to answer chronologically, or through significant events, persons or circumstances).
7. To what do you attribute the longevity and productivity of Hendricks as an educator?
8. What do you feel will be the enduring legacy of Hendricks in Christian education?
9. Please describe your role(s) in helping to shape your husband's ministry.
10. Please describe your husband's role(s) in helping to shape your ministry.

## Interview Questions on the Ministry of Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: Mel Sumrall

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

### Background and Initial Acquaintance

1. Will you briefly summarize your personal life and the circumstances which influenced or contributed to your decision to enter the Christian ministry full-time?
2. Why did you choose to pursue your theological education at Dallas Seminary?
3. How did you first encounter the ministry of Howard Hendricks in Christian education?
4. What was your perception of his ministry at that time?
5. What do you remember about your first personal meeting with Howard Hendricks?

### Academic Instruction and Student Discipleship

6. Does any one course taught by Howard Hendricks that you took at Dallas Seminary stand out among other courses that you took while at the seminary?
7. Was there anything unique or unusual about the teaching methods of Hendricks that impressed you as a student?
8. Do you feel that Hendricks teaching style has influenced your teaching style?
9. What were your impressions as a student of Howard Hendricks as a man and as a Christian role model?
10. Do you feel that you were befriended / discipled / mentored by Hendricks when you were one of his students?

### Professional Career and Public Ministry

11. Have the thoughts / ideas / methods taught to you by Howard Hendricks proven to be relevant and useful in your ministry?
12. Has your personal relationship with Howard Hendricks influenced your professional career?
13. Have you witnessed Hendricks' influence on any of your colleagues in Christian ministry?
14. Have you seen the impact of Hendricks' message or ministry in the lives of your relatives, friends, congregation members or other non-clergy?
15. How would you assess the overall impact of Howard Hendricks in shaping your ministry?

### Personal Growth and Spiritual Development

16. How has the message ( class notes, books, articles, and tapes) of Hendricks affected your personal growth and/or spiritual development?
17. How has the ministry (personal and non-academic relationship) of Hendricks affected your personal growth and/or spiritual development?

### General Observations

18. How would you assess Hendricks' contributions of to the field of Christian education?
19. How would you evaluate Hendricks' ministry to his students over the years?
20. What do you feel will be the enduring legacy of Howard Hendricks in the field of Christian education?



## Interview Questions on the Ministry of Howard G. Hendricks

Interviewee: John F. Walvoord

Interviewer: Lawrence H. Lincoln

### Background and Initial Acquaintance

1. Will you briefly summarize your personal life and the circumstances which influenced or contributed to your decision to enter the Christian ministry full-time?
2. Why did you choose to pursue your theological education and career at Dallas Seminary?
3. How did you first meet Howard Hendricks and what were your initial impressions of him?
4. What do you remember about Howard Hendricks as a student at Dallas Seminary?
5. Briefly describe your personal relationship with Hendricks over the years.

### Academic Career as an Educator

6. What were the circumstances when you asked Hendricks to teach at Dallas Seminary?
7. Was there anything in particular about Hendricks that made you feel he would become a good professor at Dallas Seminary?
8. Do you feel that Hendricks' teaching style is distinctive or unique?
9. What were the circumstances involved in the creation of the Christian Education Department at Dallas Seminary, and the appointment of Howard Hendricks as chair of the department?
10. How would you assess Hendricks' strengths and weaknesses as an educator?

### Academic Career as an Administrator

11. How would you assess the administrative skills of Howard Hendricks?
12. Are you aware of any significant contributions or innovations in administrative philosophy or practice that Hendricks has made over the years?
13. In what area of academics (instruction, curriculum, research, administration, counseling) do you believe Hendricks has the most strengths? Weaknesses?
14. Has your personal relationship with Howard Hendricks influenced your professional career?
15. What significant events, persons or circumstances are you aware of that were defining points in shaping the career and ministry of Howard Hendricks?

### General Observations

16. To what do you attribute the longevity and productivity of Howard Hendricks in his career as a Christian educator?
17. How would you explain the popularity of Hendricks as a Christian educator when he is not generally recognized as a contributing scholar in the field?
18. How would you assess Hendricks' contributions to the field of Christian education?
19. How would you evaluate Hendricks' ministry to his students over the years?
20. What do you feel will be the enduring legacy of Howard Hendricks in the field of Christian education?

APPENDIX D

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HOWARD G. HENDRICKS

## Selected Bibliography of Howard G. Hendricks

### Books

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APPENDIX E

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF HOWARD G. HENDRICKS

## Biographical Data of Howard G. Hendricks

August 2000

### *Educational Background*

AB (1946), DD (1967), Wheaton College; ThM (1950), Dallas Theological Seminary; candidate for ThD (1958), Dallas Theological Seminary; graduate study in Christian education at Wheaton College, Biblical Seminary in New York, New York University, the American Institute of Family Relations, and the Creative Education Foundation, State University College at Buffalo.

### *Professional Experience*

Instructor, Southern Bible Training School, Dallas, Texas (1946-1950). Instructor and dean, Fort Worth Bible Institute, Fort Worth, Texas (1950-1952). Dallas Theological Seminary: teaching fellow (1951-1957), assistant professor of Practical Theology (1957-1958), founder and chairman of the department of Christian Education (1958-1982), professor of Christian Education (1958-1986), professor-at-large (1986-), chairman of the Center for Christian Leadership (1986-), distinguished professor (1988-).

### *Ministry*

Pastor, Calvary Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth, Texas (1950-1952); Christian education director, youth director, and assistant pastor in a number of churches over a period of 12 years; convention representative, Scripture Press (1958-); frequent speaker at conferences on Christian education; in wide demand for pulpit supply and Bible teaching ministry; Bible teacher and chaplain, Dallas Cowboys Football Club (1976-84).

### *Honors and Positions*

Executive committee member, president, Commission on Research in Christian Education, National Sunday School Association; chairman, Board of Control, Dallas Christian Grade School; Advisory Council member, Central Alaskan Mission, Inc.; board member, Brazil Gospel Fellowship Executive Committee, Christian Service Brigade; Advisory Board, Pioneer Ministries; listed in *Who's Who in American Education*; Advisory Board, Scripture Press Foundation; Board of Advisors, Programming in American and Christian Education, Inc.; consultant, Management Dynamics, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia; lecturer, Family Concern Seminars, Omaha, Nebraska; Word of Life Council; Advisory Council member, Christian Indian Missions; Board of Advisors, International Institute for Christian Studies; International Council of Advisors, Worldwide Leadership Council, Inc.; Council of Reference, Great Commission Ministries; Board of Reference, Emerging Young Leaders.

### *Current Board Positions*

Leadership Dynamics, Inc., Multnomah School of the Bible, Ronald Blue and Company, Search Ministries, SEFOVAN, The Navigators, Walk Thru the Bible Ministries, Promise Keepers.

### *Personal*

Howard Hendricks was born on April 5, 1924, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was married to Jeanne on June 14, 1947. They raised four children, Barbara, Robert, Beverly, and William. Barbara passed away in 1999. The Hendricks's have six granddaughters.



APPENDIX F

LETTER SENT TO DALLAS SEMINARY ALUMNI  
FROM CHARLES R. SWINDOLL



# DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 23, 2000

Mr. and Mrs. Larry H. Lincoln  
1116 Oak Vly.  
Denton, TX 76209-6381

Dear Larry and Susan,

I'm writing to ask you, as a fellow graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, to help me say "thank you" to a man who has marked our lives—and multitudes of others—like no one else I know.

Those of us who love him so deeply still call him "Prof."

The man is Dr. Howard G. Hendricks.

Incredibly, this marks the 50th year "Prof" Hendricks has served our Lord here at Dallas Theological Seminary. I feel it is only fitting that we invite you to be part of this celebration.

So I've enclosed a special thank-you note to Dr. Hendricks that I'd like you to sign and return to me. And I've included room for you to write your own expressions of congratulations. I know it will blow him away!

You see, I plan to include your card with those of many other DTS friends in a special album to be presented to Prof at an anniversary dinner that will be held in his honor.

Believe me, this isn't just a celebration to honor one man's *quantity* of service, but to highlight the incredible *quality* of his impact.

Can I speak to you from my heart about that?

My emotions run especially deep, for I am one of those in leadership whose life was forged on the anvil of Prof Hendricks' passionate mentoring.

No other individual on earth today—*no one*—has marked my life like Howard Hendricks.

When I first came to Dallas in 1959 (can it be *that* long ago?), I was a green would-be minister straight out of the Marines . . . flat-top haircut and all!

One of the first pieces of advice I got was: "Hey, you really ought to get to know

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Dr. Hendricks.” Seriously, that tip has done me more good than if I had gotten in on the ground floor at Microsoft!

Literally everything in my life and future changed the semester I took Bible Study Methods from Hendricks. *What a revelation!* I could now read the Bible and, on my own, begin to *understand* the passages. Even ones that had once been a mystery. And I could grasp them in a way that I could now communicate to others.

(If you want to know the truth, I still preach sermons—and did just last week—drawing on the notes and insights Prof taught me. Those early lessons have been perpetually fresh and crucial to my handling of the Word.)

And I’m only one of many. He has elevated every seminarian’s ministry beyond anything we would have accomplished without him. He saturated us with vision—and gave us the skills to make those visions happen.

I challenge you: Measure the ministry effectiveness of anyone who’s spent any significant time on this campus . . . and by that measure, you’ll find out how much of Howard Hendricks has rubbed off on them.

But I found he was more than a teacher of the Word. Much, much more.

Like Jesus, Prof sought disciples—not just students. As he did with so many of us, he got to know me personally, made me part of his life, and taught me how to *live* as a Christian in numerous practical areas.

Words fail to convey the impact of this man! Mentor. Teacher. Affirming presence. Inspirer. Innovative communicator. Leader. Servant. I could go on.

In fact, let me tell you a story that is dear to my heart . . .

In my senior year, I was due to take part in the ceremonial “Seating of the Seniors” in January. But bad weather hit when I was in Houston visiting family. Cynthia, pregnant with our second, and our son Curt were with me.

While we were driving in that bad weather, a drunk driver ran a red light and plowed into our car. *It was a nightmare.* Curt’s jaw was broken. Cynthia was bleeding, and we faced the possibility of losing our unborn child. Our car was totaled. And instead of the joyous celebration of being publicly honored as a senior, I endured dark, lonely days of trial.

By the next week, Cynthia was still bedridden but out of the woods, so I went back to the seminary to tend to some crucial work. The weather was freezing. The inter-semester campus

(next page, please)



was largely deserted. As I walked down the dark halls of the academic building, I looked for any friendly light under a door.

When I saw one, I knocked. “*What do you want from me? I’m very busy,*” came the blunt response. It was from a professor, long gone, who shall remain nameless.

“Nothing. I don’t want anything from you,” I responded as I headed out . . . across the frozen courtyard. And I ran into Prof.

He was busy, I’m sure. But he made a beeline for me.

“I heard what happened to your family, Chuck,” he said. He put his arm around my drooped shoulders. “Do you need anything? Do you need a car? I can lend you mine. Do you need any schedule relief? I’ll arrange it. You need to concentrate on getting yourself and your family through this crisis. Don’t worry. Don’t worry about *anything* else.”

Then he said simply, “I love you.”

Wow! It was as if Jesus was speaking to me—boosting my spirits. I mattered to this man. He genuinely cared.

Prof taught me *about* Jesus, yes. But just as valuable, he *showed* me Jesus. That day, and on a thousand other occasions.

*That’s why this 50th Anniversary Celebration of Prof Hendricks is so important.*

It isn’t just a time to look back. It’s a time to celebrate the future as Prof continues to work tirelessly, enthusiastically, and effectively—even when many would have retired—to shape the leadership skills of future servant-shepherds at DTS.

This month, the seminary Board unanimously approved a 50th Anniversary fund, which will help endow *The Howard G. Hendricks Chair of Christian Leadership*. As you might expect, Prof deeply appreciates the honor but prefers to focus on a legacy ensuring the seminary’s commitment to teaching the principles of Christian leadership he continues to live out before us.

There is no better way you can honor Prof than by helping continue the work so dear to his heart.

Dr. Hendricks understood years ago that theological academics would not translate into spiritual impact if we didn’t *train* Christian leaders in the specific *skills* of servant-hearted leadership. That means intensive work in character building, integrating family and ministry,

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relational skills, management techniques, commitment to mentoring, and more.

That's why I'm challenging former students like you to honor Prof by helping him in his passionate pursuit of equipping leaders. You can help him train a legacy of leaders for the church of Jesus Christ who will transform their world—in America and around the globe.

Will you send your note, and your gift, right away?

Your gift will help meet this budget and influence so many lives for Christ.

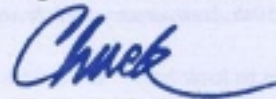
When we present Prof Hendricks with the thank-you cards from DTS friends like you, I want to tell him his former students have also provided an overflow offering for the work of DTS.

Please do whatever you can. Why? Because this is an extraordinary man—and an extraordinary moment.

In closing, let me say again how grateful I am to you. I mean that. I thank our Lord that He has called you to be part of Dallas Theological Seminary's mission of sending leaders out to transform lives in every part of our world.

And let me also thank you for helping honor our long-time friend and distinguished faculty member, Dr. Hendricks, at this rare moment. May God bless you abundantly!

A grateful student still learning from Prof,



Charles R. Swindoll  
President

P.S. To celebrate his 50th Anniversary, I've asked Prof to write you and other graduates a series of letters this year to strengthen you and your ministry. These letters will reflect on key principles he learned about the ministry during his 50 years at DTS. Please look for his first letter soon. Thank you for sending your card, and your gift, to honor this faithful man of God—and to help raise up others like him who will shake our world for the Gospel!

## APPENDIX G

ARTICLE FROM DALLAS SEMINARY PUBLICATION  
RECOGNIZING HENDRICKS S 50 YEAR CAREER

## Howard Hendricks Reaches 50-Year Mark and Continues to Build Leaders



*Wisdom from 'Prof' is more valuable than ever as students face today's spiritual challenges.*

**I**ncredibly, this year is the 50th that Dr. Howard Hendricks has developed spiritual leaders for Jesus Christ at Dallas Theological Seminary.

A distinguished professor, scholar, author, leader, inspirer, and model servant, the man known simply as "Prof" continues his amazing work as chairman of the DTS Center for Christian Leadership.

Prof's greatest legacy





*Howard G.  
Hendricks*

**1924**

*Born in Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania*

**1950**

*Begins teaching at DTS*

**1986**

*Founded the DTS  
Center for Christian  
Leadership*

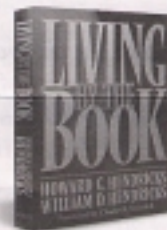
**2000**

*Continues to  
energetically and  
passionately build  
leaders for the church of  
today and tomorrow*

## Prof Hendricks' 9 Questions to Help Apply Any Scripture Passage to Your Life

### ASK YOURSELF, IS THERE . . .

1. An example for me to follow?
2. A sin to avoid?
3. A promise to claim?
4. A prayer to repeat?
5. A command to obey?
6. A condition to meet?  
Example: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7).
7. A verse to memorize?
8. An error, heresy, or danger to expose?
9. A challenge to face something in your life?



#### *"Profism" from Dr. Hendricks:*

"One of the things to do with any passage of Scripture is to bombard the text with questions. . . . I guarantee that if you approach God's Word with any degree of honesty and teachability, the Spirit won't let you go away disappointed."

*From Living by the Book by Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks (Moody, 1991).*



## Favorite "Profisms"

Some pithy Hendricks advice that has changed the course of many lives and ministries—and still helps mold students today . . .

*"You are able to do many things. But be sure to find the one thing you must do."*

*"You never graduate from the school of discipleship."*

*"If you are just like someone else, we don't need you!"*

*"How big is your God? The size of your God determines the size of everything."*



## From Chuck Swindoll Think it over...

### His major? Jesus Christ.

**W**hy do those who know Howard Hendricks love him so much?

Of course, everyone here at Dallas Theological Seminary does. Maybe we're saying it more this year, his 50th anniversary at DTS, but the feeling has been here on this campus for as long as I can remember.

*But why? What is it about the man?*

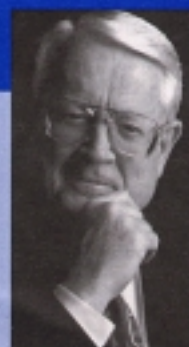
I believe the answer is that "Prof" embodies two sides of Christianity that are so difficult—but so essential—for Christians to balance.

First, he has a consuming intellectual focus on the objective truths of the Bible.

But second, he not only passionately believes these truths, he *lives* them in a humble, day-to-day walk with God and in the relationships he has with those in his life.

My friend Bruce Wilkinson of *Walk Through the Bible* might have explained it best: "Frankly, I majored in Howard Hendricks." He then smiled and added, "Why? Because he cared about each one of us as individuals and as future communicators. He was not so much teaching a course as he was ministering to his students."

Those two sides of Dr. Hendricks have given him the authority to teach the Scriptures with life-changing relevance. When I think of Prof, Mark 3:14 leaps into my mind. Referring to



Jesus, we read: "And He appointed 12, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to

preach." Don't miss the sequence: First, "that they might be with Him" and second, "that He might send them out."

It's the dynamic of discipleship. And it's the dynamic Howard Hendricks has fully brought to this seminary.

Our students learn more than doctrine from Prof. They *see* and *experience* the human effect of that truth in their relationship with him. It rubs off as they are "with him" . . . so that they're really ready to be "sent out" as a disciple of Jesus.

Prof has helped inspire us to integrate that training model into every facet of our ministry. We don't want to send out mere teachers, preachers, missionaries, or counselors. We want to send out life-changing and world-shaking *disciples*.

We majored in Howard Hendricks . . . because Howard Hendricks majored in Jesus Christ.

With your support, we're spreading Prof's contagious brand of joy into your community and around the world.

*Chuck*

## APPENDIX H

### NOVEMBER 2000 LETTER FROM HOWARD G. HENDRICKS

## Letter from Howard G. Hendricks to Dallas Seminary Alumni



November 2000

Mr. and Mrs. Larry H. Lincoln  
1116 Oak Vly  
Denton TX 76209-6381

Dear Larry and Susan,

Every time a student graduates from seminary, I add him or her to my wish list, wishing I could sit down periodically for a chat. I'm hungry for an update from you, and I keep spilling over with what God has taught me.

It's been 50 years now since God transplanted me from the pulpit to the classroom, and I have the urge to pass along a few keys to making it all worthwhile and fulfilling. I think they are ripe for sharing, so let me start with the foundation of them all . . . FOCUS.

Paul riveted me many years ago with his words, *One thing I do* . . . (Phil. 3:13). For him the past was forgettable and his future was fueled by his present center of gravity; i.e., *the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus*. What a formula for success in ministry!

About the same time, it was like a personal earthquake one day in Wheaton Chapel when I heard Dr. A. W. Tozer say, "What comes into your mind when you think about God is the most important thing about you." I've never recovered from that.

Jesus told Martha that . . . *only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her* (Luke 10:42). That tells me that I have to make tough choices. So many "goods" and "betters" have to be discarded in favor of the *one thing*. David wrote *One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek*. . . . (Ps. 27:4). The single-mindedness of it all grabs me.

If anything has kept me on track all these years, it's being skewered to this principle of central focus. You might remember my inverted triangle; there are many things I can do (and you can especially), but I have to narrow it down to the *one thing* I must do. The secret of concentration is elimination.

Our flesh keeps right on trying to con us into saying "yes" when we should say "no." It will always be a struggle. It has been for me. Just wanted you to know that down the road where I am, it's an A-1 priority. Keep your eye on the target.

Focused on Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'HGH'.

Howard G. Hendricks  
Distinguished Professor  
Chairman, Center for Christian Leadership

3909 SWISS AVENUE • DALLAS, TEXAS 75204

APPENDIX I

DECEMBER 2000 LETTER FROM HOWARD G. HENDRICKS



Letter from Howard G. Hendricks to Dallas Seminary Alumni

·HGH·

December 2000

Mr. and Mrs. Larry H. Lincoln  
1116 Oak Vly  
Denton TX 76209-6381

Dear Larry and Susan,

When I reflect on the half-century of teaching at Dallas Theological Seminary that God has given me, the years tend to blend together. In my mind's eye, I see all of my thousands of former students sitting in a giant classroom.

"Prof," they ask, "what's the magnet that keeps pulling you back into class every day, every semester, every year?" Putting it all into one word, I have to answer them, "Commitment." It's the switch that turns on my light.

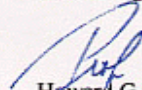
Shakespeare's King Henry V spoke apt words that apply here. Before the battle of Agincourt, the king blazoned to his men, "He today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother." Teaching is all about doing battle with shoddy thinking, with upgrading inferior concepts, with spilling cerebral blood to eradicate ignorance. Seminary teaching is about getting a student together with God on His pages.

I live with the dread of tame, domesticated, de-clawed Christianity. I fear for my students that they will chase after what they want—and therefore miss what God wants. I yearn for them, in Peter's words, to entrust their souls to a faithful creator in doing what is right (1 Pet. 4:19). That resolve is truly high-risk.

In our expansive youth, many of us hardly hesitate to put our heads in the lion's mouth; we jump off the high dive; we want to accomplish great things for God. But when injuries occur or circumstances turn sour, our words begin to float without a framework of faith; and discouragement wilts us. Jeremiah's question thunders, *If you have run with footmen and they have tired you out, then how can you compete with horses? If you fall down in a land of peace, how will you do in the thicket of the Jordan?* (Jer. 12:5). God's message demands tenacity.

My experience is that commitment is like birthdays. They keep coming up every year, demanding that I acknowledge once more my humanity. Me? Don't take that too seriously. God? A long obedience in the same direction.

Everlastingly at it,




Howard G. Hendricks  
Distinguished Professor  
Chairman, Center for Christian Leadership

3909 SWISS AVENUE • DALLAS, TEXAS 75204

## APPENDIX J

### ANNOUNCEMENT FROM DALLAS SEMINARY PUBLICATION

Announcement of the Howard G. Hendricks  
Chair for Christian Leadership



## Honoring a Legacy

Since joining the seminary faculty in 1950, Dr. Howard G. Hendricks has influenced thousands of people as a teacher, speaker, mentor, and writer. His personal ministry spans seventy nations and his writings fill bookshelves, nightstands, and hands all over the world.

Scholarship, compassion, and character are the hallmarks of leadership. This is the legacy of Howard Hendricks.

Because our culture desperately needs Christian leadership, the Dallas Theological Seminary Board of Incorporate Members has established the Howard G. Hendricks Chair for Christian Leadership.

The endowed chair will ensure the continuation of Dr. Hendricks's emphasis on character building, mentoring, integrating family with ministry, and developing leadership skills alongside teaching the Bible.

*The endowment will be funded with \$2.5 million.* Interest from the invested principal will provide a faculty salary plus research and travel expenses as well as an administrative research assistant.

There is no better way to honor "Prof" Hendricks than by helping continue the work so dear to his heart. For information contact Kim Till, Executive Director for Advancement, at 214-874-4459.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR APRIL 2, 2001 FOR A SPECIAL LUNCHEON IN DALLAS FOR PROF.**

Kindred Spirit 15

*Kindred Spirit*, Winter 2000, p. 15  
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